The True History of William and Adam Holliday

Beyond the Folklore

By Stephen A. Kleiner, Sr.

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This fourth edition introduces specific land warrant survey information pertaining to Holliday brother's warrants in today's Cambria and Clearfield Counties.

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Foreword

Stephen A. Kleiner, Sr., an amateur genealogist and history enthusiast, developed a deep interest in Hollidaysburg's past through his wife Marcy's descent from William Holliday Sr. Inspired by a gift of U.J. Jones' *History of the Early Settlement of the Juniata Valley*, he sought to reconcile folklore with evidence, drawing on primary land records, government and church documents, and historical critiques. This work reflects months of research aimed at presenting a more accurate narrative of the Holliday brothers' lives.

Prior to his work on the Holliday family, he has researched the immediate family of the Lemon family, many of whom are buried on the Hollidaysburg Presbyterian Cemetery. That research has been shared with the Allegheny Portage National Historical Site and used on their website[1].

—S. A. Kleiner, Sr.

1 See endnote https://www.nps.gov/alpo/learn/historyculture/lemon-family.htm

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Preface

> "*In the same way that a virus attacks living matter and then breeds within that living matter, U.J. Jones' version of history infested the subsequent histories that came to be written about this region*."[2] – Historian Larry D. Smith

Many years ago, my mother-in-law, Donna Elliott, gave me a copy of *History of the Early Settlement of the Juniata Valley* by U.J. Jones. She gave it to me as a birthday gift, knowing my deep interest in Hollidaysburg's history. I had always been fascinated by Hollidaysburg, but my interest grew even stronger after I married my wife, Marcy—who is directly descended from William Holliday Sr., sometimes known as "The Paymaster." The edition I have is Floyd G. Hoenstine's 1940 publication, "Notes and Extensions". Jones' original work was first published in 1856. I read the book cover to cover, immersing myself in the fascinating "history" it contained, particularly the stories of the Holliday family.

In my early genealogical research, I relied on Jones' book as a source. However, as I gained experience and improved in my research skills, I began noticing troubling inconsistencies. The information I found about the Hollidays in other sources often contradicted—or outright refuted—what Jones had written. I quickly learned I was not the first to discover this.

Historian Larry D. Smith notes on his website:

> *"What Uriah J. Jones gave to his readers were historical facts extravagantly spiced with fiction. Although his approach might have satisfied more readers who thirsted for fictional excitement, Mr. Jones' liberal employment of imagination acted as a virus to destroy historical fact for the next one hundred and fifty years. Mr. Jones quoted the early pioneers despite the fact that his sources for quotations were five or so elderly individuals, none of whom would have been more than eight or nine years of age when they supposedly heard the remarks they were quoting."*[3]

I also took time to compare Hoenstine's "Notes and Extensions" version to Jones' original. With care and tact, Hoenstine updated, corrected, and at times directly refuted Jones' claims about the history of William and Adam Holliday.

But how extensive was the damage caused by Jones' misinformation? Smith continues:

> *"The information supplied by Mr. Jones has been of some value to historians who followed him because it provided certain routes that could be followed, but the validity of the particulars associated with those routes are indeed suspect. And there is where the wealth of information bequeathed by Mr. Jones led later historians astray. Too many of Jones'*

2 From Larry D. Smith's: "Genealogical & Historical Research in Old-Bedford County" https://motherbedford.com/GenBook39.htm

3 See footnote above

> *fanciful quotes and anecdotes were accepted as pure fact without any checking to verify their validity. Practically each and every history book published after the History Of The Early Settlement Of The Juniata Valley quoted that book's information as if it embodied first-hand accounts."*[4]

Beyond the history books cited by Mr. Smith, Jones' influence persists in numerous sources. For example, many older SAR and DAR applications relied on Jones' book to support ancestral claims.[5]

Consequently, I revisited my Holliday family genealogies, removing much of the information derived from Jones' book.

But the effects of Jones' embellished stories linger to this day. For example, a historical plaque still stands on what is know as "The Diamond" in downtown Hollidaysburg, repeating much of Jones' account regarding the town's founding. The plaque, placed by a local chapter of the DAR was dedicated in 1936.[6] However, Jones' assertion that William and Adam arrived in the area as frontiersmen in 1768 is simply false.[7]

Moreover, local folklore depicts Adam Holliday as a heroic figure during the Revolutionary War in this area. This, too, is untrue.

Which brings me to the purpose of this paper: to highlight where and how Jones' book has caused widespread misunderstanding of the true history of William and Adam Holliday. Using reliable sources, we will explore a more accurate interpretation of their lives. Reasoned speculation may be employed where necessary, but it will be grounded in documented evidence.

We will begin with the early history of the central Pennsylvania Holliday family. From there, we will focus on William and Adam Holliday specifically, and examine when, where, and how they came to settle on the lands bordering the Beaverdam Branch of the Juniata River—land that would later become Hollidaysburg.

Holliday history is our history.

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4 See footnote above

5 SAR (Sons of the American Revolution) and DAR (Daughters of the American Revolution) are patriotic organizations in the United States. Both focus on honoring the legacy of those who fought or contributed to the American Revolution. Mr. Smith advises that application approval process has grown more rigorous in recent years.

6 In 2024 the original plaque was rededicated with the original wording intact.

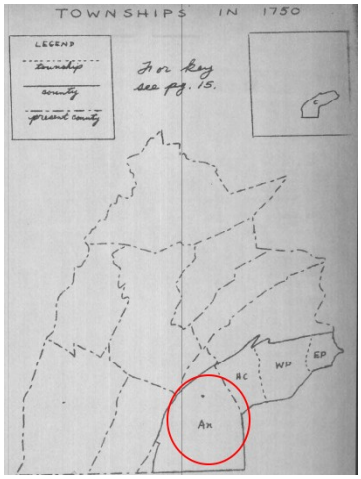
7 No fault to the DAR as Jones' work was considered valid history.

1 The Immigrants

The Hollidays Arrive in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.

Before we focus on the history of William and Adam, let's take a look at their family line.

To better understand the Holliday presence in what is today Blair County—then Bedford County—we must journey eastward, tracing their roots back to what is now western Franklin County.



Their earlier Pennsylvania home was likely situated within the boundaries of present-day Peters or St. Thomas Townships. But time rewinds the map: before Franklin County, it was Cumberland County; and before that, Lancaster County. In what was then Lancaster County we find Antrim Township, a name that predates both Peters and St. Thomas.[8]

The map shown here depicts south-central Pennsylvania counties in 1750, with Antrim Township—then part of Cumberland County—circled in red.
It was to this very Antrim Township, then part of Lancaster County, that Adam and William's father, John Holliday, arrived.

John is often called "John, the Pioneer," a title that distinguishes him from a sea of other John Hollidays and acknowledges his status as one of the first Europeans to settle the region. His arrival, as evidenced by land warrants in Antrim Township, occurred no later than the early 1740s.

John didn't make this journey alone. Initially, he was accompanied by his brothers Joseph, Alexander, Adam, James, and William.[9] There was also a sister whose name remains unknown. The six brothers all settled at first in Old Donegal, Lancaster County. In the early 1700s, "Old Donegal" in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, referred to the area surrounding Donegal Township, one of the original townships in the county. Lancaster County was established in 1729,and Donegal Township was one of its early townships, named after Donegal in Ireland. The settlers of East Donegal were of Scots-Irish descent.[10]

"American Guthrie and Allied Families" tells us that soon thereafter, three of the brothers—John, James, and William—relocated westward to what was then Antrim Township, Lancaster County. The book also tells us that William secured a land warrant in 1744 near his brothers John and James. See the

8 The Townships of Mother Cumberland: including Bedford, Blair, Centre, Cumberland, Franklin, Fulton, Huntingdon, Juniata, Mifflin, and Perry Counties, Pennsylvania. Cumberland County was formed from Lancaster County in 1750.

9 Much of this early history comes from American Guthrie and Allied Families (abbreviated). See appendix. In that book, the author considers that the Holliday line was already in America (see p. 511).

10 History of East Donegal Township, Lancaster County, Pa. https://eastdonegaltwp.com/about/?

cropped image of a rough draft of a 1760 survey showing the adjoining lands of John Holliday, William Holliday, and James Holliday (deceased).[11]

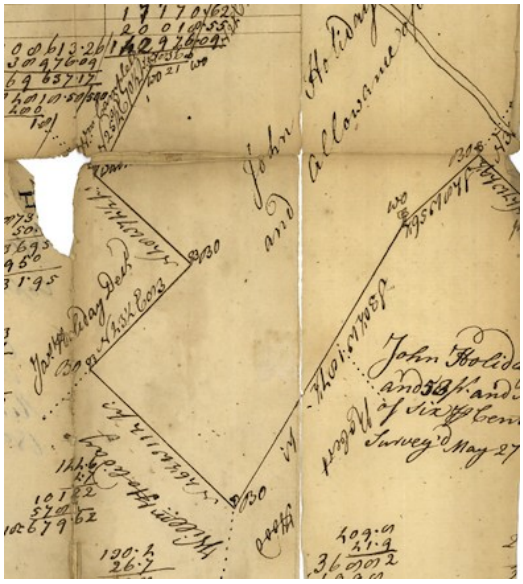


Figure 1: 1760 Map showing John, William and James (Dec'd) properties adjoining one another.

11 See the archives section of the Franklin County website. James was deceased at the time of the map, having been killed during an engagement with Native Americans.

2 Were the historic central Pennsylvania Hollidays actually Scots-Irish?

The ancestry of William and Adam Holliday was likely Scots-Irish. While historical accounts may offer conflicting details, the evidence strongly suggests that the early Lancaster County Hollidays were part of the significant Scots-Irish immigration wave of that era.

History books frequently mention the Scots-Irish among early Pennsylvania settlers. But what exactly does "Scots-Irish" mean? Is it interchangeable with "Scotch-Irish" or "Ulster Scots?" Indeed, all three terms describe the same group, though, as historian Larry Smith observed, the discussion can become quite *heated*, depending on the individuals involved. For clarity, this piece will use "Scots-Irish."

It appears the Hollidays of antiquity originated from a region known as Annandale, in the south of Scotland.[12] In that region is the town of Dumfries which is also associated with the Hollidays. Edmund Holliday, father of the John Holliday is associated with the town of Dumfries.

Who *were* the Scots-Irish? Professor Judith Ridner of Mississippi State University offers helpful clarification:

"Pennsylvania's Scots Irish, a hybrid people of Scots and Irish ancestry, were the most numerically predominant group within an Irish diaspora migration that brought between 250,000 and 500,000 Irish immigrants (most of them Protestants from Ulster and predominately Presbyterians) to America between 1700 and 1820. Philadelphia was one of their principal destinations.

As the prototypical "peoples in motion" of their time, the Scots Irish moved first from the Scottish Lowlands to Ulster during the seventeenth century at the behest of the English, who desired them to act as a Protestant colonizing force among Ireland's native Catholics. After 1700, when faced with deteriorating economic conditions and mounting religious and political persecution as dissenting Protestants (not members of the official, state-sponsored Church of Ireland) in Ireland, and later, after the failed 1798 Uprising (a rebellion of Irish Protestants and Catholics that aimed to overthrow British rule and establish a republic) and the British crackdown that followed it, they chose to migrate again."[13]

Historian Larry Smith tells us a deeper dive into history will reveal more than this one migration from Scotland to Ireland. Interestingly, the first occurred a couple millennia ago and was in the opposite direction.

To date, definitive proof of the Holliday Scots-Irish heritage remains elusive. However, indirect and circumstantial evidence suggests a connection. For instance, the "American Guthries" genealogy supports this notion, indicating that Edmond Halliday(Sp), father of John the Pioneer and grandfather

12 House of Names Website https://www.houseofnames.com/holliday-family-crest
13 Scots Irish (Scotch Irish) https://philadelphiaencyclopedia.org/essays/scots-irish/#essay by Judith Ridner

to William and Adam, was born in Scotland and later died in Ireland. His wife, Mary, also reportedly passed away in Ireland.

The "American Guthries" further notes that Edmund and Mary had six sons. The eldest, John (the Pioneer), was born in Scotland, while the third child was born in Ireland.[14] While this book lacks source citations in some instances, its details are noteworthy.

Another valuable resource is a history of the Presbyterian church in present-day Mercersburg, Pennsylvania. The author notes that its earliest congregants hailed from Scotland and Northern Ireland. As Pastor Thomas Creigh wrote:

“This immediate part of Kittochtinny valley called “Conococheague Settlement,” began to be inhabited by the Scotch Irish from the North of Ireland about the year 1730. In their “fatherland” they belonged to the Presbyterian church.”[15]

Pastor Creigh's history doesn't list the *earliest* members, but it does include "Communicants"[16] beginning in 1770. Among them are individuals likely belonging to the second generation of Hollidays (with one "L"). Later, in 1792, John Holliday (1769-1838) joined the church Session.[17]

Pending further discoveries, we will consider the Hollidays of the early 1700s in what was once Antrim Township, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, British America, as part of the broader Scots-Irish community.

14 American Guthrie and allied families (abbr)

15 History of the Presbyterian Church of Upper West Conococheague, Thomas Creigh, Pastor

16 Communing members are those who have been baptized and who have also been examined and approved by the Session as having made a credible profession of faith. https://www.twopathways.org/p/church-membership-in-the-pca

17 In the Presbyterian Church (USA), the Session is the group of ruling elders, elected by the congregation, who make decisions for the administration of the local church and who serve as spiritual leaders of the congregation. https://www.gbpres.org/the-role-of-session-in-the-presbyterian-church-usa/

3 The Persecution of the Presbyterians

Before moving on from the Hollidays of early Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, it’s worth a quick look at Scottish history and the persecution of people of the Presbyterian faith.

In his book, *History of the Presbyterian Church of Upper West Conococheague*, Pastor Thomas Craigh tells us:

> *“From Scotland and from the north of Ireland, mainly, did the new tenants come. The spirit of oppression had there reigned both in church and state. Under this oppression they had groaned for many a long year.”*

This likely refers to a period known as "The Killing Time" during the Scottish Covenanter persecution. The Covenanters were a 17th-century Scottish religious and political movement who bound themselves by covenants to uphold Presbyterianism as the sole form of church government in Scotland and to resist royal interference in religious affairs. Their commitment to these covenants often led to periods of persecution and rebellion against the Stuart monarchs.

The "Wigtown Martyrs," or "Solway Martyrs," included Margaret Wilson and Margaret McLachlan (also spelled McLauchlan or MacLachlan). These two women were sentenced to death by drowning for refusing to swear an oath recognizing the king as head of the church instead of Christ. They were tied to stakes in the Solway Firth, a tidal basin, and drowned as the tide rose.

Margaret Wilson was just 18 years old, while Margaret McLachlan was in her 60s. Their execution was part of a broader persecution of Presbyterians (Covenanters) who opposed the imposition of Episcopalian church governance and royal supremacy over the Church of Scotland.

This martyrdom became an important symbol in Scottish Presbyterian history and is commemorated by monuments in Wigtown, Scotland. Their story exemplifies the religious persecution that occurred during the "Killing Times" when many Scots were executed for their religious convictions.

Were the Holliday clan Covenanters? Possibly but not definitively. Given the time and location, the Presbyterian Hollidays were likely present in the Scottish Lowlands during the “Killing Times”. The incident of the "Wigtown Martyrs" occurred about 50 miles from Dumfries, Scotland where Edmund Halliday (variant of Holliday) is said to be from.[18]

18 American Guthrie and allied families (abbreviated) P 511

4 Patronymics in the Holliday Family

Naming children after other family members was, and still is, fairly common. The Hollidays made it a well-ingrained family tradition. Consider the practice, starting with three of the sons of Edmund and Mary Holliday. Let's focus on the male offspring of John, William, and James.

Covering each generation in detail would be tedious, so instead, let's look at a few examples.[19] From the early 1700s into the 1800s, the lines of John, William, and James of Antrim Township, Lancaster County, British America, produced at least:

- 17 Williams
- 13 Johns
- 11 James
- 11 Samuels
- 8 Adams
- 3 Josephs
- 2 Patricks

From a genealogical perspective,[20] sorting these out can be overwhelming. For example, consider the will of one of the John Hollidays. His will mentions his children Adam, James, John, and Samuel, along with his brother James and his nephew John.[21]

On the female side, let's simplify things by focusing on one given name: Mary. There are about 10 Mary Hollidays to consider within the same generational timeline.

One outcome of all these namesakes is that it can lead to confusion and errors when trying to decipher a family genealogy.

For example, some historical sources tell us that William and Adam Holliday (of founding Hollidaysburg fame) served together as privates in a Bedford County militia unit. A closer look, however, suggests the history books have the wrong "William" and "Adam." Rather, the two Hollidays mentioned in the militia record are not the elders, but are young men of the next generation. The soldiers are more likely the sons of the elder William—William Holliday Sr., to be specific. A later chapter will cover this in more detail.

For example, some historical sources claim that William and Adam Holliday (of Hollidaysburg founding fame) served together as privates in a Bedford County militia unit. A closer look, however, suggests the history books have identified the wrong "William" and "Adam." In reality, the two Hollidays mentioned in the militia record are not the elders, but young men of the next generation—

19 Examples only and not a complete account of all descendants of John, William, and James Holliday.
20 The genealogy project used for this information is ongoing and available in a public tree on Ancestry.com.
21 Will of John Holliday Jr (1731-1806) Pennsylvania, U.S., Wills and Probate Records, 1683-1993, Ancestry.com.

most likely the sons of the elder William, specifically William Holliday Sr. A later chapter will cover this in more detail.

But there is another matter that stands out when it comes to namesakes. The father of the early Antrim Township arrivals was supposedly Eduard Halliday. Yet, as we look through the family lines of the Holliday men who settled in Antrim Township, Lancaster County, we do not find a single descendant named Eduard. For genealogical purposes, this raises questions about the accuracy of the lineage.

5 The 1768 Settlers According to U. J. Jones

The Holliday Brothers Arrive at the base of Chimney Rocks – Or Did They?

U. J. Jones' version of the history of the founding of Hollidaysburg is a marvelously worded (but inaccurate) story. His account of the 1768 arrival of frontiersmen William and Adam Holliday, and all that followed, has been indelibly burned into local lore.

So deeply ingrained is this folklore that in 1968, Hollidaysburg held a Bicentennial event celebrating the "driving of the stake" event, complete with ceremonies, parades, and dedications. Earlier, in 1938, a bronze tablet was placed on the "Diamond" in downtown Hollidaysburg by the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution (NSDAR), commemorating, among other things, that it was Adam who drove a stake into the frontier hillside and pronounced:

> *"Whoever is alive a hundred years after this will see a tolerable sized town here, and this will be near about the middle of it."*

This quote is taken directly from U. J. Jones' version of local history. Is it accurate? For that matter, is it even true? The text is inconsistent with Adam's documented presence elsewhere and resembles popular 19th-century romanticized storytelling rather than verified history.

Before we continue, let us make it clear that the citizens and civic organizations who believed Jones' and put their faith in his work cannot be faulted for trusting his stories of Hollidaysburg's founding. The book is very entertaining and is put forth as true history. Surely, any Hollidaysburg citizen would want to believe that Adam Holliday was not only the founder of Hollidaysburg but also a brave and staunch frontiersman who went on to become a local leader and hero during the War for Independence.

However, professional historical researchers and governmental organizations who took Jones' "History of the Early Settlement of the Juniata Valley" at his word should have done better. By their profession and position, they owed due diligence to the public when it comes to reporting historical matters. Even with access to historical records that would easily challenge Jones' account, they failed.

For clarification, this is not to say that U. J. Jones was deliberately misleading his readers. Rather, it appears that he, or his sources, often confused people and events with inaccurate or blurry recollections.

An Analysis

Let us consider two salient factors.

1. **The credibility of Jones' version of Hollidaysburg history.** He often provides no sources or references, other than the collective memories of some older citizens at the time the book was written. As noted in the appendix section of this paper, historian Larry D. Smith makes a strong case for questioning the legitimacy of U. J. Jones's interpretation of upper Juniata Valley history. See the article by h*istorian Larry D. Smith* at the end of this paper.
2. **Documented sources about the Hollidays.** Some basic research reveals information about the Hollidays that does not match, and often refutes, what Jones wrote in his book. For Adam Holliday, there are two versions of his life:
   - The Blair County folklore, based on Jones' account, has Adam arriving in 1768, staking a claim to lands where Hollidaysburg now lies, and then living his life and leading the community through all the travails that followed.
   - The Franklin County version, based on multiple sources, has Adam as a documented resident there as early as 1768, then residing and owning property in old Peters Township (now Franklin County) through the following decades until about 1793. Around that year, Adam sold his Peters Township farm and relocated to Frankstown Township, in what was then Huntingdon County.

To be clear, Adam did not appear in any census or tax records as a resident in or near early Frankstown Township. Not until a full quarter century had passed from 1768 did Adam finally make a home along the banks of the Beaverdam Branch of the Juniata River.

Examining Jones' 1768 Account

From U. J. Jones:

> *"The Hollidays were emphatically frontier-men; and on the restoration of peace in 1768, probably under the impression that the Conococheague Valley was becoming too thickly populated, they disposed of their land, placed their families and effects upon pack-horses, and again turned their faces toward the west."*

Historical records support that William was indeed a frontiersman in the early days of Frankstown Township, but not in 1768. A land warrant for 300 acres in the vicinity of today's Chest Springs was in William's name. This warrant was dated in 1773 and shows William's County of residence as Cumberland County, Pennsylvania[22] However, an early record does place William in what would become Frankstown Township as early as 1775.[23]

22 See https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/2350/images/33019_b079040-00847?pId=154975 Note: there will be more on the "Chest Springs" warrant later in this paper.

23 See tax documents for Barree Township, Bedford County for the year 1775. In that year it became part of Frankstown Township.

For Adam, there is no documented support that he was in the area as a resident in the 1760s through the 1780s. Historical records of the time place Adam residing in the vicinity of Peters Township, Cumberland County.

Similarly, there is supporting documentation that William brought his family to the area, but that documentation suggests it was not in 1768, but rather in the 1770s, that William made his way to this area. For Adam, even if he did make such a journey in 1768, contrary to what Jones says, there was no family for him to bring along. He was not married until 1769, and even then, that event took place at the Presbyterian Church of the Upper West Conococheague, located in Peters Township, Cumberland County. It was not until 1778 that Adam's eldest child, John, was born and then baptized in that same church.

As far as "disposing of land," there is evidence that William was a landowner in the early Peters Township days. But there are no records[24] of land ownership prior to 1768 for Adam. Author James R. Holliday states that Adam Holliday owned property in Peters Township, Cumberland County from 1768 to 1770, prior to Adam inheriting a major portion of his father's farm.[25]

Aside from factual errors, Jones tends to confound the historical events in the lives of William and Adam. In other words, certain events and actions in William's life are credited to Adam—such as during the Revolutionary War when William was rallying the citizens and seeking support for their cause, yet Adam is given the credit. More on this later when we cover the military records of William and Adam.

The Misleading Literary Style of U. J. Jones

Beyond the factual discrepancies, Jones' own literary style raises questions about the factual basis of his writing.

Jones continues his version of the 1768 event:

> *"However, when they reached the place where Hollidaysburg now stands, and were just on the point of descending the hill toward the river, Adam halted, and declared his intention to pitch his tent and travel no farther"….."they dismounted and prepared to build a temporary shelter. When Adam drove the first stake into the ground he casually remarked to William, " Whoever is alive a hundred years after this will see a tolerable sized town here, and this will be near about the middle of it."*

Jones' entertaining writing has so much detail that a natural inquiry would be: "Where did Jones get this information?" How did, or even could, Jones know specifically Adam's intent, actions, and statements?

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24 Author James R. Holliday states that Adam Holliday owned property in Peters Township, Cumberland County prior to Adam inheriting a major portion of his father's farm.

25 For citations and sources, please see the Individual Summaries of William and Adam Holliday located at the end of this paper

What is Jones' source for Adam's word-for-word, historically significant yet casual remark to William that 'Whoever is alive a hundred years after this will see a tolerable-sized town here, and this will be near about the middle of it'?"

Aside from Jones' version, are there other documents or records of the "driving of the stake" event? None stand out at this time. There are no known memoirs of William or Adam. There is no known independent source that offers a reliable basis for such detail.

It appears that this portion of Jones' version of Hollidaysburg history was motivated by a desire to tell an interesting story rather than to relay historical accuracy. Larry D. Smith's website "Mother Bedford" states:

> *"According to William H. Egle, who edited, added an appendix and republished the History Of The Early Settlement Of The Juniata Valley, in 1889, Mr. Jones "could tell a local happening in a way that made you read it despite yourself." There was no doubt that Uriah J. Jones could write imaginative narratives, having started his career by writing fiction and traveling with a theatre company for over a year."*[26]

Where does Storytelling End and Fact Begin?

The problem arises: where do the "imaginative narratives" end and the "factual reporting of history" begin? How does the reader know whether what they are reading is embellished literary fiction or historical fact?

Myth vs Evidence -The Adam Holiday Dual Residence Conundrum

Some researchers have noted that substantial documentation shows that Adam Holliday maintained a residence in Peters Township, Cumberland County; while during the same period Jones—without citing any supporting sources— claimed Adam was living in what was then western Barree Township, Cumberland County[27]. To reconcile this discrepancy, some of those researchers have concluded that Adam must have traveled regularly between the two locations.

In *Descendants of John Holliday "The Pioneer" and Their Allied Familie*s, author James R. Holliday notes that William appears on the Peters Township tax rolls from 1751 to 1770, and Adam from 1768 through 1770. Interestingly Author J. R. Holliday and interprets that Adam must have "commuted' between the two counties. Author Holliday writes:

26 See https://www.motherbedford.com/GenBook39.htm for a full discussion of U. J. Jones literary style

27 The lands that today's Hollidaysburg sits on was once within what was then Antrim Township, Cumberland County

> *"At the time of the move to Hollidaysburg in 1768, unlike Adam who was back and forth between there and the plantation at Mount Parnell[28] for many years, William and his family seemed to have settled down on their land at Gaysport.[29]*

This narrative accepts Jones' account, including the assertion that Adam staked a claim to what is now Hollidaysburg. However, as discussed elsewhere in this paper, no such claim or warrant exists.[1] The dual-residency theory appears to serve as a way to preserve Jones' unsubstantiated 1768 timeline while attempting to reconcile it with historical facts and records that suggest a different version of events.

J. R. Holliday is not the only person, that accepted, without further inquiry, Jones' assertion that it was 1768 William and Adam Holliday came to settle the lands below the Chimney Rocks. For example, another established Holliday genealogist, Mrs. Jean Latimer Hoops Potts does the same.[30] In her work entitled *The Family of Holliday Indicating Direct Line to and from Jonathan Leet* she states:

> *"In 1768, Adam and William, his brother, started west and stopped at the place where Hollidaysburg now stands…."*

As well, from there she goes on to repeat the "driving of the stake" by Adam Holliday scenario.

Even more so confounding are the governmental agencies telling various correspondents that the Hollidays arrived in 1768. For example in 1938 Curtis Garrison, Archivist from the Pennsylvania Department of Public Instruction responds to an inquiry from Floyd G. Hoenstine, regarding the military service of William and Adam Holliday. Mr Garrison wrote:

> *In the fall of 1776, the brothers, William and Adam Hollyday, who settled in 1768 where Hollidaysburg now stands, were serving as Privates in Captain Thomas Paxton's Ranging Company of the Bedford County Militia.*

Aside from providing incorrect military service information, Mr. Garrison repeats the 1768 date.. But he does not explain the basis for the 1768 date. A reasonable possibility is he, like so many others, were repeating, without question, what Jones' wrote.

Distinguishing between romanticized narrative and verifiable evidence remains essential if we hope to understand the real sequence of events behind Hollidaysburg's founding.

The 1768 Story Takeaway

Jones' vivid and entertaining narrative—particularly the tale of Adam Holliday driving a stake into the ground in 1768 and predicting the future town—became ingrained in local folklore despite lacking supporting historical evidence. However, documented records, reveal that Adam Holliday never applied for or received a land warrant for what eventually became Hollidaysburg. Rather, he, and brother

28 Mount Parnell was a name for the lands owned by John Holliday in Peters Township, Cumberland County.

29 Hollidaysburg and Gaysport weren't in existence at the time, thus the author may have busing these locations for reader reference.

30 Some of Mrs. Potts research and work is on file at the Blair County Genealogical Society.

William for that matter, were residing in Franklin County during the period in question. William eventually settled in Frankstown, Bedford County by 1775. Adam however, did not settle near Hollidaysburg until decades later, in the 1790s.

6 Looking Westward

Fiction vs Fact

In his book, Jones continues with a 1768 conversation between William and Adam:

> *"He (Adam) argued with his cousin[31] that the Indian titles west of the mountains were not extinguished; and if they bought from the Indians, they would be forced, on the extinguishment of their titles, to purchase a second time or lose their lands and live in constant dread of the savages. Although William had a covetous eye on the fine lands of the Alleghany, the wise counsel of Adam prevailed, and they dismounted and prepared to build a temporary shelter."*

However, historical records and events refute Jones's story about the 1768 arrival of William and Adam as frontiersmen at the far western reaches of then-Cumberland County.

Records from early Cumberland County (today's Franklin County area) provide many facts that show William's presence in or around Peters Township during that time. Consider that in 1768, records have William serving as a traverse juror in Cumberland County; that same year, he was appointed as a viewer (with others) to establish roadways in the county. Additionally, he and another person were appointed to serve as "overseer of the poor" in Peters Township, also in 1768.[32] We also find a land warrant application for William that gives his county of residence in 1773 as Cumberland.[33]

This effectively removes William from the picture in Jones's story of the arrival of the frontiersmen and all that came afterward.

Records of Adam's activities at the time are harder to come by. However, there are records for Peters Township and Cumberland County suggesting Adam was there, rather than pioneering his way westward in search of new lands. In 1769 and 1771, Adam served as a traverse juror in that county. Traverse juror status does not by itself irrefutably place Adam in the Peters Township area, but issues of travel and communication suggest that a residence in or around Peters Township would have been more likely than establishing a homestead on the "western frontier."

Another factor is that, at the death of his father John in 1770, Adam inherited two-thirds of the family farm located in Peters Township, Cumberland County. A key provision of the will was that John's wife, Mary, and (apparent) invalid son Joseph were to remain on the farm with Adam until their deaths. Tax records from many following years place Adam in Peters Township as well.

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31 Jones has William and Adam as Cousins, however they are brothers.

32 Fendrick Virginia Shannon, *American Revolutionary soldiers of Franklin County, Pennsylvania [sic]* (Provo, UT: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2005).

33 Bedford County was formed from a portion of Cumberland County in 1771.

How did Jones get it so wrong? The answer lies in the credibility of his sources. As well-intentioned as they may have been, they simply got it wrong. Their memories may reflect family or community tradition or oral history based on folklore rather than fact.

Although the records do not support Jones's portrayal of William and Adam as frontier settlers in 1768, later evidence clearly shows that the brothers became involved in western land acquisition after additional lands were opened for settlement in 1773.

The Untold Story of Lands to the West

There is more to the story of William Holliday's "covetous" eyes on the "fine lands of the Alleghany," as Jones puts it. What is it about that particular year that led Jones to weave 1768 into his story? Jones does not say so explicitly, but he appears to infer that William and Adam may have moved westward from Peters Township in search of lands still held by the Indians.

Treaty of Fort Stanwix

The year ties into the Treaty of Fort Stanwix. The Treaty of Fort Stanwix was negotiated in 1768 to extinguish Native American land claims and to open up western lands for colonial settlement. The treaty established a new "Line of Property"—a boundary between colonial and Native lands—that extended the earlier Proclamation Line of 1763 much farther west, following the Ohio River and affecting large areas including present-day western Pennsylvania, Kentucky, and West Virginia.

The story of the arrival of William and Adam, as told by Jones, actually intertwines with real history. Compare Jones's narrative with the background of the Treaty of Fort Stanwix.

The historical record takes a different turn in 1773 when William,

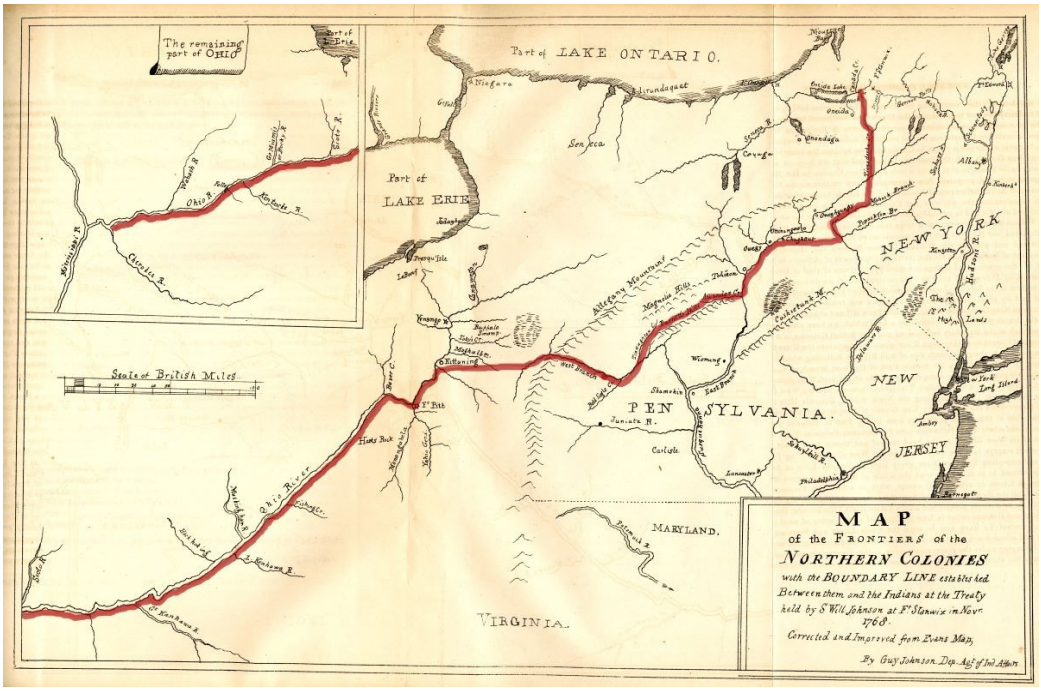


Figure 2: 1768 Treaty of Fort Stanwix Map

Adam, and two additional Holliday brothers took out land warrants in the very area that Jones describes as the "fine lands of the Allegheny." The lands those warrants were taken out for were likely in the vicinity of present-day Chest Springs in neighboring Cambria County. This raises an important issue.

The Purchase Line Is Finalized

The Purchase Line in Pennsylvania, referenced above in connection with the Treaty of Fort Stanwix, wasn't entirely fixed in 1768. The final portion of the Purchase Line within Pennsylvania was eventually agreed upon in 1773 by representatives of the Six Nations and Pennsylvania at a place called Canoe Place, which is at the confluence of the West Branch of the Susquehanna River and Cush Cushion Creek (now Cherry Tree, Pennsylvania).

The Purchase Line gave practical effect to the land cession agreed to in the Treaty of Fort Stanwix, separating land opened for colonial settlement from that which remained reserved or under Native control. Lands south of this line were opened to colonial settlement as part of the cession. It appears, at least circumstantially, that the four Holliday brothers took advantage of the situation.

The Holliday Brothers' Land Warrants

Records from July of 1773 have the Holliday brothers—William, Adam, John Jr., and Samuel—making applications for warrants in the vicinity of the Manor of Chest. Today, that area is in and around Chest Springs in Cambria County, Pennsylvania. The records show that for two of the warrants, the county was Westmoreland; for the other two, the county was Bedford. This discrepancy is likely due to errors in geography at the time. Pennsylvania's Westmoreland County was formed by an Act of Assembly, approved by Governor Richard Penn, on February 26, 1773.[34]

Regardless of the county discrepancy, land warrant records suggest that all four warrants were near or adjacent to one another. Each warrant was for 300[35] acres, and their given specific locations were either "on the Waters of Clearfield Creek," "on the upper Beaver Dam Run of the Clearfield Waters," or "on the branch of Clearfield Creek up Beaver Dam." See the illustration of "Chest Manor" below for the approximate area of these claims. Note, we only see William Holliday's name, but it can be assumed his brothers' claims are in the area.

At this point, it is worth noting that by 1782[36] tax records show William Sr. as having 1,900 acres in Frankstown Township, which would include the Chest Springs area. This may include the acreage on the south and west side of Chest Manor, however, at this time, specific information as to how and when he acquired this acreage is unknown to this author.

Newly discovered survey records for the Holliday brothers' land warrants provide additional detail and confirm the actual locations of their claims. The records also suggest that James and William Jr., likely sons of William Sr., held land interests in the Chest Springs area.

34 See history of Westmoreland County

35 To curb speculation, each applicant was limited to a maximum of 300 acres. See https://www.phmc.state.pa.us/bah/dam/rg/sd/r17sda.htm

36 See https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/2497/records/1394817?tid=151574745&pid=352009444892&ssrc=pt

The surveys further reveal warrant activity in the vicinity of present-day Decatur Township, Clearfield County. There, brothers John Jr. and Samuel appear as warrant holders, while William Sr. and Adam are mentioned incidentally as adjoining landowners. Notably, the warrants in both areas share the same application date of 23 July 1773 and were each issued for 300 acres. Full warrant and survey details, along with map references, are provided in the appendix.

It is worth noting that Jones made no mention of this significant land warrant activity by the Holliday brothers. Whether he was unaware of the warrants, considered the lands outside the scope of the Juniata Valley narrative, or omitted them because they conflicted with his portrayal of Adam's limited western ambitions, remains uncertain.

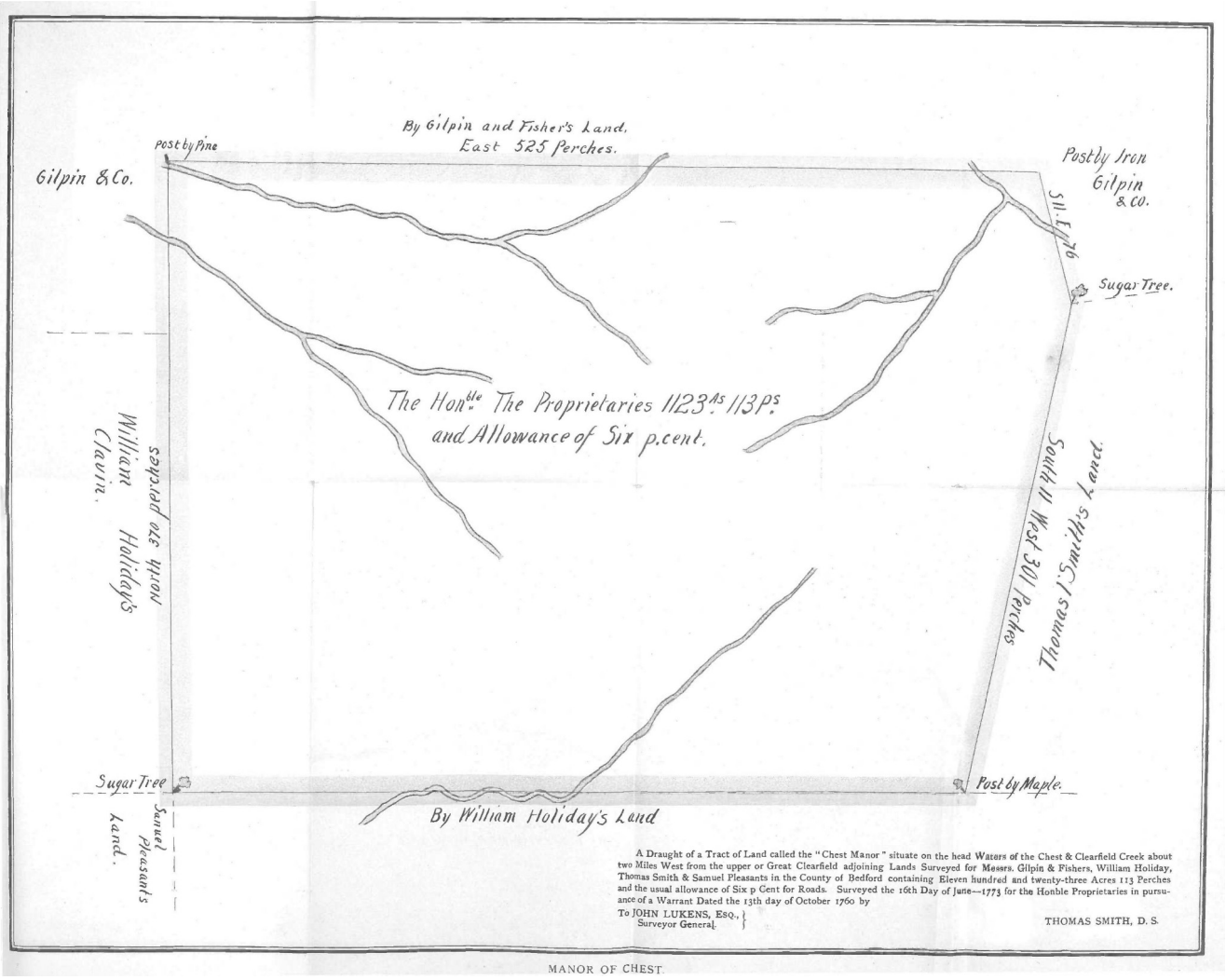

By Gilpin and Fisher's Land,
East 525 Perches.
Post by Pine
Gilpin & Co.
Post by Iron
Gilpin
& Co.
S 11 E 176
Sugar Tree.
The Honble The Proprietaries 1123As 113Ps
and Allowance of Six p.cent.
William Holiday's Claim.
South 176 perches
South 11 West 301 perches
Thomas Smith's Land.
Sugar Tree
Post by Maple
By William Holiday's Land
Samuel Pleasants Land.
A Draught of a Tract of Land called the "Chest Manor" situate on the head Waters of the Chest & Clearfield Creek about two Miles West from the upper or Great Clearfield adjoining Lands Surveyed for Messrs. Gilpin & Fishers, William Holiday, Thomas Smith & Samuel Pleasants in the County of Bedford containing Eleven hundred and twenty-three Acres 113 Perches and the usual allowance of Six p Cent for Roads. Surveyed the 16th Day of June—1773 for the Honble Proprietaries in pursuance of a Warrant Dated the 13th day of October 1760 by
To JOHN LUKENS, Esq., Surveyor General.
THOMAS SMITH, D. S.
MANOR OF CHEST

Figure 3: Manor of Chest
Also see:
https://www.phmc.state.pa.us/bah/dam/rg/di/r17-114copiedsurveybooks/Books%20B1-B23/Book%20B-23/Book%20B23%20284.pdf

7 The 1768 Adam Holliday Land Warrant Myth

Jones continues his narrative of the 1768 Holliday brothers folklore. Referring to the lands around the supposed “driving of the stake” proclamation, he wrote:

> *“These lands belonged to the new purchase, and were in the market at a very low price, in order to encourage settlers on the frontier. Accordingly, Adam Holliday took out a warrant for 1000 acres, comprising all the land upon which Hollidaysburg now stands. The lower or southern part was too marshy to work; so Mr. Holliday erected his cabin near where the American House now stands, and made a clearing on the high ground stretching toward the east. In the mean time, William Holliday purchased of Mr. Peters 1000 acres of land, which embraced the present Crawford and Jackson farms and a greater part of Gaysport.”*

This text set the stage for a portion of the Holliday folklore that took firm root in local belief. The folklore claims that Adam lost his warranted lands by court action brought by a man named Harry Gordon. As we see below, this is a false story. Adam never had a warrant for these particular lands as Jones presents.

Floyd G Hoenstine addresses this misinformation directly in his reprint of Jones’ work. Where Jones states:

> *“These lands belonged to the new purchase, and were in the market at a very low price, in order to encourage settlers on the frontier. Accordingly, Adam Holliday took out a warrant for 1000 acres, comprising all the land upon which Hollidaysburg now stands.”*

In the glossary of his reprint Hoenstine clarifies:

> *“The tract of land upon which Hollidaysburg now stands extending from the Frankstown Hill, along the north bank of the Beaver Dam Branch of the Juniata River containing 1497 acres was warranted to Richard Peters on November 17, 1762. Richard Peters released the lands on April 14, 1770, to the proprietors who then patented the lands to Henry Gordon on May 17, 1774. This deed is on record in the Bedford County Court House.”*

For William’s property, Jones states:

> *“In the mean time, William Holliday purchased of Mr. Peters 1000 acres of land, which embraced the present Crawford and Jackson farms and a greater part of Gaysport.”*

Again, in the glossary of his reprint Hoenstine clarifies:

"The land on the south bank of the Beaver Dam Branch of the Juniata River, where Gaysport now stands was warranted to Peter and Thomas Vanbuskirk on the 31st day of May, 1762."[37]

Most importantly, Hoenstine makes it clear that documentation doesn't support Jones' narrative. He states:

"The land office advises that they are unable to find any record of either Adam or Williams Holliday acquiring the land mentioned above."

Additionally, a solid refutation of the 1,000-acre warrant story comes from recent research by James Snyder Jr., President of the Blair County Genealogical Society. The following illustration by Mr. Snyder shows the trail of land ownership for the tract of land that later became part of Hollidaysburg.

Holldaysburg Land Trail

6/Jul/1754 Penn Heir's purchase land from Six nations

17/Mar/1762 Richard Peters (of Phila.) warrants 1497 acres 2 miles above Frankstown & north side of Juniata river. Peters released ground to the Penn's in exchange for other property!

14/May/1774 Major Harry Gordon (Engineer) from the Penn's acquire's the 1497 acres and names it Gordonfield

9/Mar/1776 Major Gordon purchases from George Woods 323 acres adjoining Gordonfield property (Bedford Co. Deed Vol. A Pages 228/229)

2/Oct/1783 Major Gordon charged with treason. Commonwealth sells 1500 acres to James Woods (Bedford Co. Deed Vol. B Pg. 32)

2/Oct/1783 James Woods deeds to John Maxwell Nesbit (Bedford Co. Deed Vo. B Pg. 34)

11/Apr/1796 John M. Nesbit deeds to Adam Holliday 753 acres . (Huntingdon Co. Deed Vol. E-1 Pg. 274)

17/Nov/1807 Major Gordon starts selling town lots. And by Executors: John Blair, John Walker, Thomas Biddle, Elisha Chauncey & Silas Moore

It was not until 1796 that Adam Holliday came into possession of this tract—not by warrant, but by purchase.

37 Yet somehow, William eventually did gain "ownership" of this or nearby property at some point later in time. Which was passed on to his son John Holliday, who in turn lost the land due to court action brought by another claimant.

Aftermath of the Warrant Myth

In the book, U. J. Jones continues:

> *These lands belonged to the new purchase, and were in the market at a very low price, in order to encourage settlers on the frontier. Accordingly, Adam Holliday took out a warrant for 1000 acres, comprising all the land upon which Hollidaysburg now stands. The lower or southern part was too marshy to work; so Mr. Holliday erected his cabin near where the American House now stands, and made a clearing on the high ground stretching toward the east.*

However, if Adam never applied for or received the land warrant as Jones claims, then all events tied to that—and what followed—are in doubt. Specifically, regarding the 1768 folklore, the building of the cabin and the clearing of land to the east did not occur as per Jones' narrative.

Jones' narrative continues into what became the folklore of Adam losing his property to Harry Gordon.

> *Thus matters progressed smoothly for a time, until, unfortunately, a Scotchman, named Henry Gordon, in search of lands, happened to see and admire his farm. Gordon was a keen, shrewd fellow, and in looking over the records of the land office he discovered a flaw or informality in Adam's grant. He immediately took advantage of his discovery, and took out a patent for the land. Litigation followed, as a matter of course. Gordon possessed considerable legal acumen, and had withal money and a determined spirit. The case was tried in the courts below and the courts above, decided sometimes in favor of one party and sometimes in favor of the other, but eventually resulted in Gordon wresting from Adam Holliday and Lazarus Lowry all their land. This unfortunate circumstance deeply afflicted Mr. Holliday, for he had undoubtedly been grossly wronged by the adroitness and cunning of Gordon; but relief came to him when he least expected it.*

According to Jones, all this occurred prior to the War for Independence. But as we see above in Mr. Snyder's research, this is simply not true.[38] No such events happened at that time or in that manner.

38 At least in the manner as told by U. J. Jones, Adam Holliday did lose the lands he purchased from Nesbit, as per Mr. Snyder's chart. This was through a court action. As we'll see in a later chapter, at least portions of William Holliday's land were lost by his son John, also due to court action.

8 Misappropriation of Valor

Credit Where Credit Wasn't Due

A particular disservice that Jones does to the true history of early Frankstown Township, Bedford County, and to William Holliday is his account of the activities of the Holliday brothers during the Revolutionary War. Here's an example, as Jones continues in his book:

> *"During the alarms and troubles which followed in the course of the war, Adam Holliday took a conspicuous part in defending the frontier. He aided, first, in erecting Fetter's Fort, and afterwards expended his means in turning Titus's stable into a fort. This fort was located on the flat, nearly opposite the second lock below Hollidaysburg, and the two served as a place of refuge for all the settlers of what was then merely called the Upper End of Frankstown District. He also, with his own money, purchased provisions, and through his exertions arms and ammunition were brought from the eastern counties. His courage and energy inspired the settlers to make a stand at a time when they were on the very point of flying to Cumberland county. In December, 1777, Mr. Holliday visited Philadelphia for the purpose of securing a part of the funds appropriated to the defence of the frontier."*

The issue is that Jones credits Adam Holliday with what were actually William Holliday's efforts and exertions during the Revolutionary War. In "*The History of the Early Settlement of the Juniata Valley*" Jones provides the following content of a letter to President Wharton written by Colonel John Piper:

Bedford County, December 19, 1777.

> *"Sir:—Permit me, sir, to recommend to you, for counsel and direction, the bearer, Mr. Holliday, an inhabitant of Frankstown, one of the frontier settlements of our county, who has, at his own risk, been extremely active in assembling the people of that settlement together and in purchasing provisions to serve the militia who came to their assistance. As there was no person appointed either to purchase provisions or to serve them out, necessity obliged the bearer, with the assistance of some neighbors, to purchase a considerable quantity of provisions for that purpose, by which the inhabitants have been enabled to make a stand. His request is that he may be supplied with cash not only to discharge the debts already contracted, but likewise to enable him to lay up a store for future demand. I beg leave, sir, to refer to the bearer for further information, in hopes you will provide for their further support. Their situation requires immediate assistance. I am, sir, with all due respect, your Excellency's most obedient humble servant, John Piper.*[39]"

Jones credits Adam with the delivery of this letter. In fact, as we'll see, it was William. From the Colonial Archives:

39 See Pa. Archives, Original Series, Volume 6, page 115

> *"Ten days later, on 29 December 1777 an order was drawn on David Rittenhouse, Esq'r, Treasurer of the State, in favor of* ***Wm. Holliday****, for the Sum of Four hundred Pounds, to Pay for Provisions purchased to supply the Militia of Bedford County, & to continue the Supply, which Sum is to be charged to Colo, Piper, Lieu't of said County.*[40]*"*

The fact that the two records are only ten days apart, combined with the shared context—Bedford County militia provisions, Frankstown, and Col. Piper's involvement—strongly suggests that the 'Mr. Holliday' in Piper's letter was William Holliday. The official record makes it clear that William Holliday was the one entrusted and recognized by the state for this critical logistical support, as he is the payee for the reimbursement of militia provisions.

Further on in Jones' narrative though, he continues to glorify Adam, while at the same time diminishing William's actual involvement:

> *Mr. Holliday's*[41] *mission was successful; and he returned with means to recruit the fort with provisions and ammunition, and continued to be an active and energetic frontiersman during all the Indian troubles which followed. Notwithstanding the distracted state of society during the Revolution, William Holliday devoted much time and attention to his farm.*

Jones's account elevates Adam Holliday as the principal actor in the provisioning and defense of Frankstown, while casting William as primarily a farmer during the Revolution.[42]

Again, how did Jones get it so wrong? In part, due to faulty or perhaps biased memories of his sources. Written decades later, Jones's account may reflect family or community tradition, oral history, or confusion between the two brothers' roles. Regardless, Jones's misplaced credit has tarnished local history.

What does Genealogy say?

Records show that by 1777, William was firmly established in the early Frankstown community. Records from 1775 and 1776 show William as a property owner. In 1776, he was selected as a "superintendent" for a road to be established between Bedford and Frankstown.

However, for Adam, records from the 1770s and 1780s place him as a resident landowner in Peters Township, Cumberland County. There are no such records placing Adam as a resident landowner[43] in Frankstown Township during that time. Additionally in 1776 Adam Holliday was married to Sarah

40 See Colonial Records, Volume 11, page 292

41 Mr. Holliday in this case being Adam according to Jones.

42 As noted in Part 5, Jones portrays Adam as the wise older brother who counseled William (with the covetous eye) that they should look no further west and remain where they were. (At the site where Hollidaysburg would later be established)

43 As noted in a previous chapter, Adam was a non-resident landowner for land in today's Cambria County.

Campbell at the Presbyterian Church of the Upper West Conococheague located in Peters Township, Cumberland County.[44] His first child John was later baptized in that same church.

In short, while William Holliday was present in 1777 Frankstown Township, Adam was not.

The Petition for Relief Document

Genealogical records place William in Frankstown and Adam in Peters Township during the War for Independence. However, there is one anomaly.

In 1779 there was a petition, wherein the signatories sought relief from depredations by Tories and Native Americans. This document states it was from the "Inhabitants Living on the Headwaters of the Juniata, part of the frontiers of Bedford County, State of Pennsylvania". Adam's name is attached to that petition; his is the last name listed.

Yet land ownership and tax records for 1779 and 1780 place Adam as a resident of Peters Township, Cumberland County. How is this conflicting information reconciled?

One possibility is that petitions frequently represented collective concerns, and signatories could include those who, while not current residents, had served the community in a military or civic capacity[45], or had family still living there. The right to petition was a broad and inclusive political tool, possibly allowing for the participation of those who lived within their jurisdictions as well as those with strong connections to the area. In this case, that connection would be his strong kinship to brother William.

Scholarly analysis notes that collective petitions were sometimes signed by groups whose members were not all current residents but had a stake in the outcome[46]. The process of gathering signatures was flexible, and authorities generally accepted petitions as representing the interests of the signatories, regardless of strict residency.

44 See the genealogies for William and Adam Holliday near the end of this paper.

45 In Peters Township, Cumberland County Adam Holliday appears appears to have been an active and respected member of the community, serving on juries and as a witness to various wills and deeds. See American Revolutionary soldiers of Franklin County, Pennsylvania by Virginia Shannon Fendrick, page 277

46 See A Short History of the Right To Petition Government for the Redress of Grievances by Stephen A. Higginson, https://openyls.law.yale.edu/bitstream/handle/20.500.13051/16443/14_96YaleLJ142_November1986_.pdf?

9 A Question of Military Service

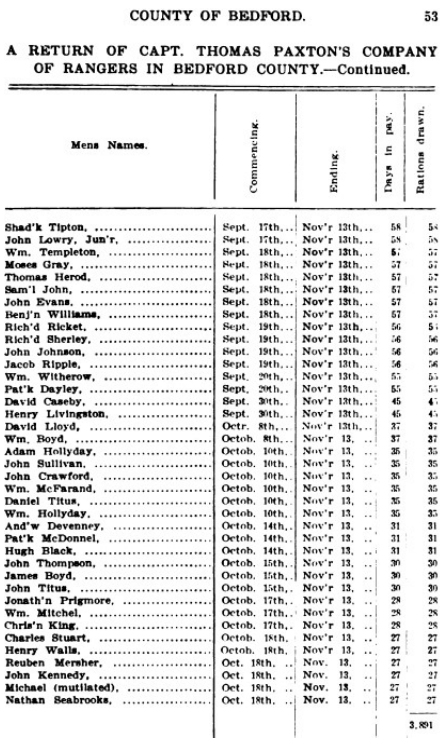
Misinterpretation of Military Records?

Three of William Holliday Sr.'s eldest sons—John, James, and William Jr.—were appointed or quickly promoted to officer or non-commissioned officer (NCO) status during the Revolutionary War.[47] However, some sources claim that William and Adam Holliday, Bedford County frontiersmen, served only as Privates in the Bedford County Militia in 1776.

Elsewhere in Cumberland County, two of William and Adam Holliday's brothers also held commissioned officer status during the war.

What explains this discrepancy? How anomalous is it that William Sr.'s sons and siblings were appointed directly to officer status, while, despite their social and civic stature, William and Adam enlisted at the rank of Private?

Setting U. J. Jones's tales of folklore aside, what does historical documentation actually tell us about the military service of William and Adam Holliday during the War for Independence?



COUNTY OF BEDFORD. 53

A RETURN OF CAPT. THOMAS PAXTON'S COMPANY OF RANGERS IN BEDFORD COUNTY.—Continued.

Mens Names.	Commencing.	Ending.	Days in pay.	Rations drawn.
Shad'k Tipton,	Sept. 17th,	Nov'r 13th,	58	58
John Lowry, Jun'r,	Sept. 17th,	Nov'r 13th,	58	58
Wm. Templeton,	Sept. 18th,	Nov'r 13th,	57	57
Moses Gray,	Sept. 18th,	Nov'r 13th,	57	57
Thomas Herod,	Sept. 18th,	Nov'r 13th,	57	57
Sam'l John,	Sept. 18th,	Nov'r 13th,	57	57
John Evans,	Sept. 18th,	Nov'r 13th,	57	57
Benj'n Williams,	Sept. 18th,	Nov'r 13th,	57	57
Rich'd Ricket,	Sept. 19th,	Nov'r 13th,	56	56
Rich'd Sherley,	Sept. 19th,	Nov'r 13th,	56	56
John Johnson,	Sept. 19th,	Nov'r 13th,	56	56
Jacob Ripple,	Sept. 19th,	Nov'r 13th,	56	56
Wm. Witherow,	Sept. 20th,	Nov'r 13th,	55	55
Pat'k Dayley,	Sept. 20th,	Nov'r 13th,	55	55
David Caseby,	Sept. 30th,	Nov'r 13th,	45	45
Henry Livingston,	Sept. 30th,	Nov'r 13th,	45	45
David Lloyd,	Octr. 8th,	Nov'r 13th,	37	37
Wm. Boyd,	Octob. 8th,	Nov'r 13,	37	37
Adam Hollyday,	Octob. 10th,	Nov'r 13,	35	35
John Sullivan,	Octob. 10th,	Nov'r 13,	35	35
John Crawford,	Octob. 10th,	Nov'r 13,	35	35
Wm. McFarand,	Octob. 10th,	Nov'r 13,	35	35
Daniel Titus,	Octob. 10th,	Nov'r 13,	35	35
Wm. Hollyday,	Octob. 10th,	Nov'r 13,	35	35
And'w Devenney,	Octob. 14th,	Nov'r 13,	31	31
Pat'k McDonnel,	Octob. 14th,	Nov'r 13,	31	31
Hugh Black,	Octob. 14th,	Nov'r 13,	31	31
John Thompson,	Octob. 15th,	Nov'r 13,	30	30
James Boyd,	Octob. 15th,	Nov'r 13,	30	30
John Titus,	Octob. 15th,	Nov'r 13,	30	30
Jonath'n Prigmore,	Octob. 17th,	Nov'r 13,	28	28
Wm. Mitchel,	Octob. 17th,	Nov'r 13,	28	28
Chris'n King,	Octob. 17th,	Nov'r 13,	28	28
Charles Stuart,	Octob. 18th,	Nov'r 13,	27	27
Henry Walls,	Octob. 18th,	Nov'r 13,	27	27
Reuben Mersher,	Oct. 18th,	Nov. 13,	27	27
John Kennedy,	Oct. 18th,	Nov. 13,	27	27
Michael (mutilated),	Oct. 18th,	Nov. 13,	27	27
Nathan Seabrooks,	Oct. 18th,	Nov. 13,	27	27
				3,891

The Question of Identity

The question is: Were these men William Holliday Sr. (who became the Paymaster for the Bedford Militia) and his brother Adam Holliday, or were they two other individuals with the same names? Specifically, could they have been the sons of William Holliday Sr.?

Part of this confusion lies at the feet of U. J. Jones, whose story of the 1768 migration of William Sr. and brother Adam places these brothers in the vicinity of where Hollidaysburg would eventually be formed. It is only Jones' story that

Chronologically, the first record to consider is the service of William and Adam Hollyday (note the alternate spelling).[48] These records pertain to Captain Paxton's Ranging Company in Bedford County, showing that William and Adam Hollyday served as privates from October 10 to November 13, 1776.[49]

47 For details see the genealogies for these men towards the end of this paper.

48 Also please note that the historical records will have alternate spellings of the name Holliday, such as Hollyday, Halliday and similar.

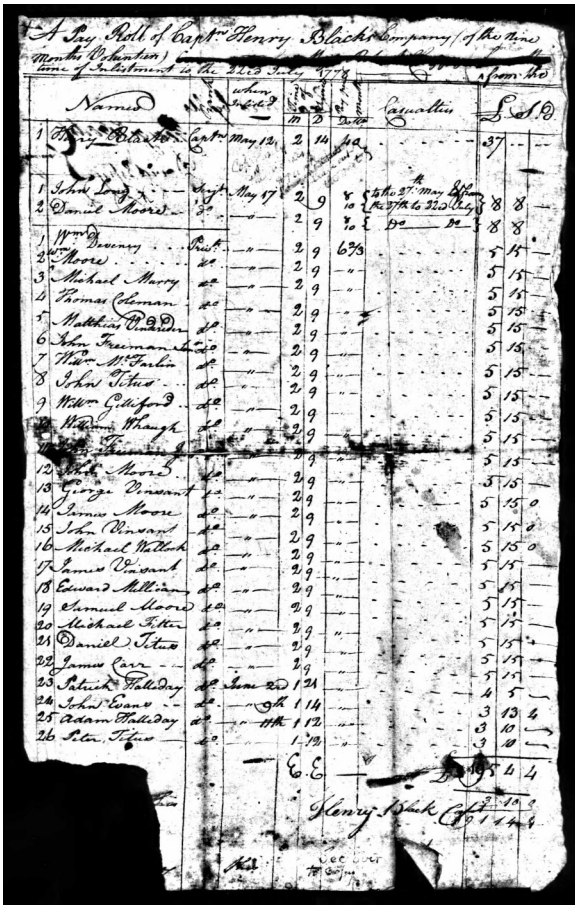
49 See Pennsylvania Archives, Series 5, Volume 5, pages 52-57. Note, Hollyday is as spelled in the record.

places them here. Without that, subsequent researchers would not have a basis to assume the 1776 “Hollyday” soldiers were William Sr. and brother Adam.

Let’s consider the military rank of William and Adam Hollyday as given in the record. It shows them each at the rank of Private. Is the rank of Private consistent with the elder Holliday brothers' social and civic status? In an earlier chapter, we see that while residing in Peters Township, Cumberland County, they both served as Traverse Jurors for the county. In 1768, William Holliday was appointed as “Overseer of the Poor” and “Viewer to Establish Roads” in early Cumberland County. Then, in April 1776, in Bedford County, he was selected as a Superintendent for a road to be established between Bedford and Frankstown. These positions of civic responsibility and duty are not consistent with William enlisting at the rank of Private in the fall of 1776.

Beyond the matter of implied civic responsibility, we also see that Adam Holliday was called upon, while in Peters Township, Cumberland County, to serve as a witness for various deeds and wills. Census information places Adam Holliday in Peters Township from 1772 to 1779.[50] Also of note is that Adam married Sarah Campbell on 14 November 1776, at the Presbyterian Church of the Upper West Conococheague in Cumberland County. This is just one day after the enlistment of Adam “Hollyday” ended in Captain Paxton’s unit.

If Adam Hollyday the soldier and Adam Holliday the groom were indeed the same person, he would have had to travel in a single day—using 1770s transportation—from the frontiers of Bedford County to a church in Peters Township, Cumberland County. In the 1770s, travel by horse or foot was limited to approximately 15 to 20 miles per day, with taverns and inns typically spaced 7 to 15 miles apart to accommodate travelers. This would make such a journey across the significant distance between Bedford and Cumberland Counties in a single day highly improbable.[51]



This is in no way a disparagement of those serving at the rank of Private. It is an honorable position upon whose backs wars are fought. Rather, the point is that the rank of Private for the elder William and Adam seems incongruous with their family’s civic and social stature.

Records also tell us that a Patrick Holliday and an Adam Holliday served under Captain Henry Black’s Volunteer Company, commanded by Major Robert Clugage. Patrick’s enlistment was from 2 June 1778 to 22 July 1778 (one month and 21 days), while Adam’s enlistment was from 11 June 1778 to 22 July 1778 (one month and 12 days). Their ranks were also Privates. Are we to

50 See American Revolutionary soldiers of Franklin County, Pennsylvania by Virginia Shannon Fendrick, page 277
51 From correspondence with Historian Larry D. Smith

assume this Adam Holliday is the elder who actually resided in Peters Township, Cumberland County? Not likely.

William Holliday Sr. had two sons named Patrick and Adam. It is more probable that these were the soldiers Patrick and Adam. Again, for the reasons stated above, it is improbable that the Adam in this enlistment was the elder Adam Holliday, who eventually came to found the village of Hollidaysburg in early Frankstown Township.

A look at the payroll roster for this unit provides another perspective. Serving as Sergeant of the unit was Daniel Moore—very likely the same Daniel Moore credited with being one of the first settlers in the area, and approximately 28 years old at the time. While militia units often elected officers based on leadership, skill, or popularity rather than age alone, meaning a younger man like Moore could serve as a Sergeant[52], it remains improbable that the elder Adam Holliday, at approximately 43 years old and with significant civic stature as a juror, witness, and community leader, would have served as a Private under Moore. Given the Holliday family's pattern of holding officer or non-commissioned officer roles and their prominent social standing, it is more likely that the Adam listed was a younger family member, such as William Sr.'s son, rather than the elder Adam serving alongside his nephew Patrick, who was in his upper teens.[53]

Sibling Service – Another perspective

We also have service records of the Cumberland County brothers of William and Adam Holliday to consider. Therein we can find brother Samuel Holliday showing as a Captain in Derry Township, 5th Battalion of the Cumberland County Militia.[54] There is also another brother, John Jr., for which there are a couple of records out of Cumberland County: one listing him as a "Soldier" in Captain Thomas Blair's Company, and another indicating he was a Lieutenant in the 7th Company, 4th Battalion of the Cumberland County Militia.

There is a record of an Adam Holliday of Cumberland County, who is not listed with officer status. This might have been a different person sharing the same name. A possibility is that a son of John Jr., mentioned above, was named Adam. But there is little information about him or his age.

The Holliday Youths At War

If the William and Adam "Hollyday" serving in Captain Paxton's Ranging Company in Bedford County are not the elder brothers of the same name, then who are they? Most likely, the William mentioned is William Jr., son of William Sr.[55] The Adam in question may have been another son of William Sr. How old would these sons of William Sr. have been at the time? William Jr. would have been in his upper teens, perhaps age 17. His age is derived from his year of birth on his Veteran's Burial Card. The younger Adam could have been in his early teens, but there is no definitive record showing his year of birth.

52 From correspondence with Historian Larry D. Smith

53 The exact year of birth for Adam and Patrick, sons of William Sr, the Paymaster is not definitive at this time.

54 See https://www.pa.gov/agencies/phmc/pa-state-archives/research-online/research-guides/revolutionary-war-militia-overview/cumberland-county-revolutionary-war-militia.html

55 A genealogy by Jean Latimer Hoopes Potts, 2nd great granddaughter of William Holliday Sr (The Paymaster) has William Jr serving in Paxton's unit. However she provides no source data. Potts' document is on file at the Blair Count Genealogy Society.

Conclusion

The military records from the Revolutionary War period reveal a notable pattern within the Holliday family. Three of William Holliday Sr.'s eldest sons—John, James, and William Jr.—were either directly appointed to, or quickly promoted into, officer or non-commissioned officer positions. For example, John Holliday was appointed as a Lieutenant in 1775, James as a Sergeant in the same unit, and William Jr. advanced from Private to sub-lieutenant by 1777.

This pattern of advancement was not limited to William Sr.'s sons. Elsewhere, two of William Sr. and Adam Holliday's brothers also held officer commissions in the Cumberland County militia. Samuel Holliday served as a Captain, and John Jr. is recorded as both a soldier and a lieutenant in different companies.

Another factor to consider is that officers were often elected or chosen by members of their own company.[56] It would be more consistent that if William Sr., or even Adam for that matter, to be strong contenders for appointment to officer status given their social and civic status. As opposed to assigned to the rank of Private.

Given these facts, it is notable that some records list "William and Adam Hollyday" as privates in Captain Paxton's Ranging Company in 1776. This is particularly anomalous considering both William and Adam's established civic roles—serving as jurors, road viewers, and community leaders.

Furthermore, the timing of Adam Holliday's marriage—just one day after his supposed discharge as a private—makes it highly unlikely that the Adam Hollyday, listed as a private, was the same person as the elder Adam Holliday. The logistical challenge of traveling from Bedford County to Cumberland County in a single day in the 1770s would have been formidable.

While men of status could theoretically serve as Privates, the Holliday family's consistent pattern of officer appointments is notable. Combined with the social norms of the era, this strongly suggests that the privates named William and Adam Hollyday were more likely younger family members—perhaps William Jr. and a younger Adam—rather than the elder brothers.[57]

56 See https://www.motherbedford.com/Documents05.htm and https://www.motherbedford.com/Articles2.htm

57 See the earlier chapter in this paper of Patronymics and how that may have contributed to the mistaken identities of the "Hollyday" vs the "Holliday" brothers.

10 A More Likely Scenario of Local Holliday History

Contrary to the writings of U. J. Jones, William and Adam Holliday did not arrive in this area as frontiersmen in 1768. Nor did William and Adam take out land warrants for 1,000 acres. The chain of events of 1768 that Jones writes about in the History of the Early Settlement of the Juniata Valley is made up.[58]

At least until 1773, William and his brother Adam were residents of Cumberland County. In fact, Adam was a resident of the Peters Township vicinity for most of his life until the early 1790s, when he relocated to then Frankstown Township, Huntingdon County.

So what really happened?

A significant benchmark event occurred in 1773. This is the year that the “Purchase Line” was finalized. The Purchase Line, established by the Treaty of Fort Stanwix (1768) and finalized at Canoe Place (Cherry Tree, PA) in 1773, marked the northern and eastern boundary of the "New Purchase" lands in western Pennsylvania. Lands south of this line (including those surrounding the Chest Manor) were opened to colonial settlement as part of the cession.

However, the Chest Manor (see figure included in this chapter) itself was a proprietary reserve of the Penn family, surveyed[59] and set aside prior to the opening of the surrounding lands. It was specifically excluded from the lands ceded by the treaty, and not available for general settlement.

As we’ll see, Chest Manor is important in the understanding of the history of the Holliday brothers.

On the same day, 23 July 1773, the four able-bodied brothers—William, Adam, John Jr., and Samuel—all residents of Cumberland County, Pennsylvania, each took out a land

Figure 4: Approximate Location of the Chest Manor

58 See earlier chapters in this paper for a more complete discussion of this.

59 According to text in the map of Chest Manor, it was surveyed on 16 June, 1773. about a month before the Holliday brothers took out their warrants.

warrant.[60]. Each of their warrants was for 300 acres in then Frankstown Township on the Upper Beaver Dam Run on the Clearfield Waters. Today, this land is in the vicinity of Chest Springs in Cambria County.

A map of "Chest Manor" is included below and shows William Holliday had a "claim" on lands to the west. On the south side, the map has the words "by William Holliday's Land." Additional text thereon states, in part:

"A Draught of a Tract of Land called the "Chest Manor " situate on the head Waters of the Chest & Clearfield Creek about two Miles West from the upper or Great Clearfield adjoining Lands Surveyed for Messrs. Gilpin & Fishers, William Holliday, Thomas Smith & Samuel Pleasants in the County of Bedford …."

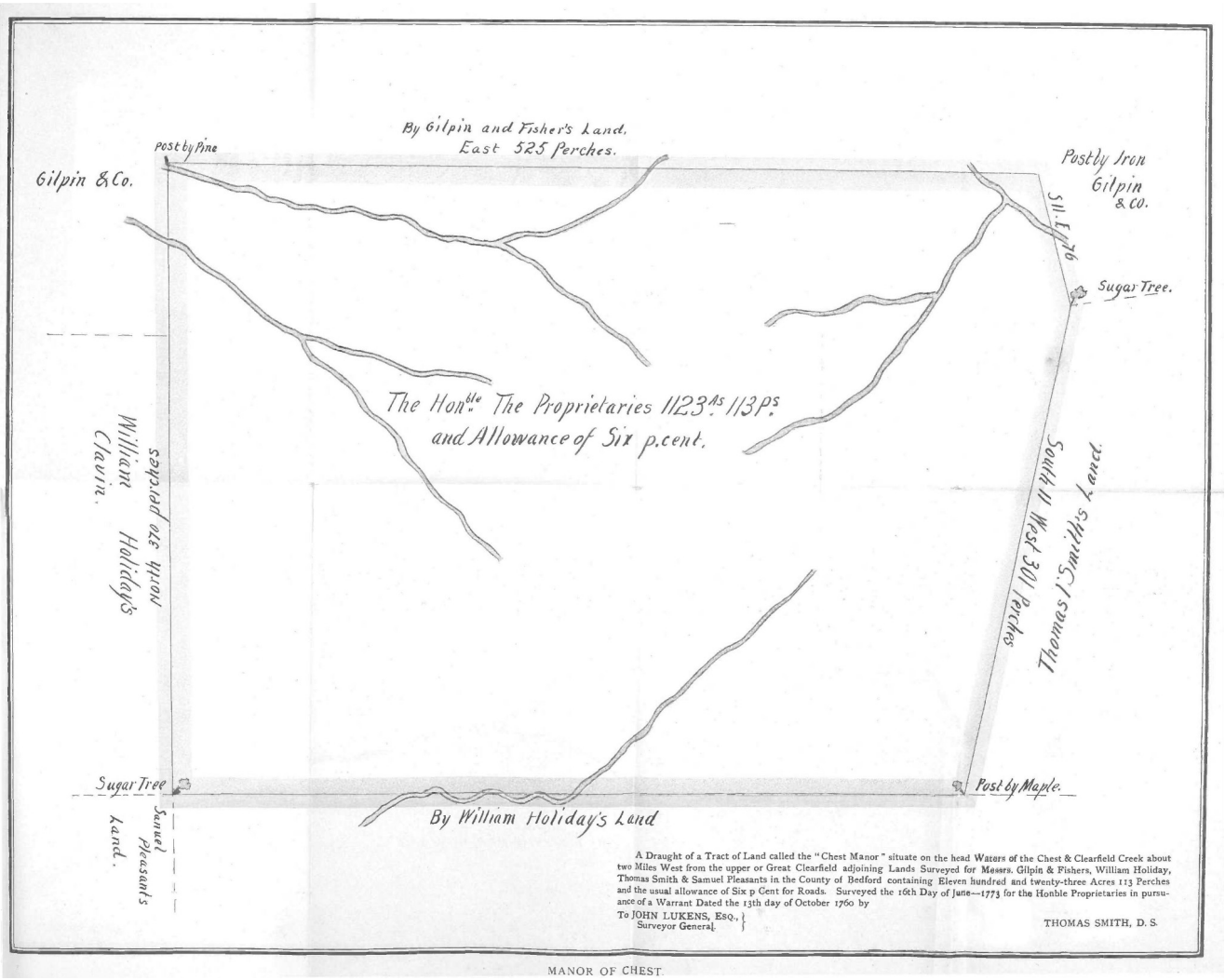

By Gilpin and Fisher's Land.
East 525 Perches.
post by Pine
Gilpin & Co.
Postby Iron
Gilpin
& Co.
S 11. E. 276
Sugar Tree.
The Hon.ble The Proprietaries 1123As 113Ps
and Allowance of Six p.cent.
William Holiday's Claim.
North 328 perches
South 11 West 311 perches
Thomas Smith's Land.
Sugar Tree
Post by Maple.
By William Holiday's Land
Samuel Pleasants Land.
A Draught of a Tract of Land called the "Chest Manor" situate on the head Waters of the Chest & Clearfield Creek about two Miles West from the upper or Great Clearfield adjoining Lands Surveyed for Messrs. Gilpin & Fishers, William Holiday, Thomas Smith & Samuel Pleasants in the County of Bedford containing Eleven hundred and twenty-three Acres 113 Perches and the usual allowance of Six p Cent for Roads. Surveyed the 16th Day of June—1773 for the Honble Proprietaries in pursuance of a Warrant Dated the 13th day of October 1760 by
To JOHN LUKENS, ESQ., Surveyor General.
THOMAS SMITH, D. S.
MANOR OF CHEST.

Figure 5: Chest Manor Survey Showing William Holliday As An Adjoining Landowner

60 The warrant records mistakenly show the warrants for William and John Jr. as being for Westmoreland County. This is an error. The property was actually in then Bedford County.

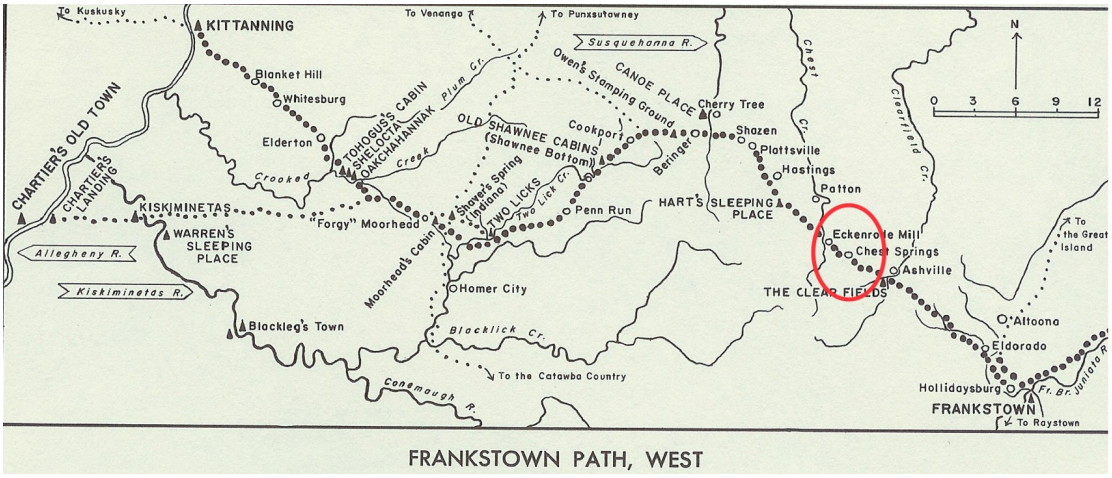
Why the Chest Manor Location?

What was it that motivated them to take land warrants for these particular tracts of land? At this time, we do not have specific information along that line, but consider:

1. The Kittanning Trail (sometimes called the Kittanning Path or Frankstown Path) was a major east-west Native American and colonial route crossing the Allegheny Mountains, connecting the Susquehanna River valleys in central Pennsylvania to the western frontier and Ohio River basin. Being near this well-known trail would make any property more accessible for movement of goods and people, vital for trade, commerce, and community interaction.[61]

2. Applying for a land warrant in the vicinity of (but not within) a proprietary manor in 1773 Pennsylvania provided a blend of security, prime location, legal clarity, access to resources, and good prospects for community development—advantages not available on unsettled frontier land.

Was the interest in this area for land speculation, settlement, or perhaps a mixture of the above? At this point a reasonable conjecture is that all four brothers would have been land speculating. Adam and John Jr. appeared to have been rooted in the Peters Township area at the time, while Samuel was showing interest in lands where Mifflin County would be someday formed. William would be included in the land speculation aspect, but again, as a conjecture only, he may have been keeping his options open as far as potential settlement for he and his family.



FRANKSTOWN PATH, WEST

Figure 6: Frankstown Path Showing Chest Springs in Cambria County

61 See the discussion within this chapter about William Holliday's expertise in establishment of roadways in the frontier lands.

What Happened to Those Claims?

Records tell us that William's claim was patented[62] in his name in 1796, the year of his death. By 1784, William was a landowner of 1900 acres in the vicinity of the "Clearfields". Where the additional acreage, over and above Williams original warrant for 300 acres, came from is unknown. One conjecture is that, while he was adjacent to "Chest Manor", he may have been able to purchase those lands, if they became available.

John Jr.'s claim was patented in 1870 by J. Blake Walters. At this time, it is unknown to this writer at what point, John Jr let this property go.

Samuel Holliday's claim was patented in 1841 by Samuel Hegerty. Records indicate that Samuel, classified as a non-resident, held this property until at least 1790[63].

Adam Holliday's claim was patented in his name in 1796. From 1773 to the time of the patent, records show Adam regularly in possession of this tract of land. However, until the early 1790s, Adam was shown as a non-resident. Coincidental or otherwise, also in 1796, Adam now owns the land from where he begins selling lots in the village where Hollidaysburg would someday be founded.

At this time, it is unknown what became of the lands that William and Adam had patented, thus indisputably being the official owners of these lands.

William (The Paymaster) Becomes the First Holliday Resident

Tax records[64] from the 1770s clarify the trajectory of when the Hollidays first came to the lands on or about where Hollidaysburg was eventually founded. In addition to William Holliday Sr. (the Paymaster) being present in 1775, records also show the presence of at least two of his sons: the elder son, John, and William Jr. Notably, the surnames of all three men appear in the records as "Halliday."

An examination of the 1774 tax records shows no listing for any Holliday or Halliday in either Barree or Bedford Townships. This provides strong evidence that 1775 was the year these particular Hollidays arrived and settled in the area.

In early 1775, the area around what is now Hollidaysburg lay within or near parts of Barree and Bedford Townships, both then in Bedford County. The 1775 tax records for those townships list William Sr. as a tax-paying resident of Bedford Township and as a non-resident taxpayer of Barree Township. This indicates there were two distinct properties.

Later in 1775, Frankstown Township was formed from portions of Bedford and Barree Townships. Tax records for the newly formed Frankstown Township in Bedford County list William Sr. and his son

62 When a warrant for land was "patented" in colonial Pennsylvania, it meant that the applicant had completed all necessary steps (application, survey, and payment) and was granted official, permanent ownership of the property.

63 For Samuel and Adam, this non-resident status pertains to the "Clearfield Waters" lands in then Frankstown Township, Bedford County. Up into the point that Adam finally relocated to Frankstown Township.

64 See Pennsylvania Archives (1897 Edition, Third Series, Volume XXII

William Jr. as resident taxpayers. William Sr. held 200 acres of land and some livestock; William Jr. held 100 acres of land and livestock as well. With William Jr. now appearing in the records, it raises the possibility that one of the earlier "pre-Frankstown" property listings may have belonged to him all along. Perhaps the record keeper mistook one William Holliday for the other, as often happened. Or perhaps, as previously noted, William Sr. owned both the Bedford and Barree tracts.

The eldest son, John, also appears in 1775 as a tax-paying "freeman" in Bedford Township, Bedford County.

In Pennsylvania records from the 1770s, a "freeman" referred to a man who was neither a slave nor an indentured servant and who enjoyed full civil and political rights within the community. Being a freeman meant having earned the right to vote, hold office, own property, and participate in civic affairs. The designation was significant enough that it was often recorded in documents as a marker of a person's social and legal status.[65]

It appears that at least some of William Sr's. lands may have eventually been passed on to his eldest son, John. John's pension application tells us his father bequeathed him a plantation in Frankstown Township, Huntingdon County. However, in 1802, an "ejectment" was brought against John Holliday by Edward and Joseph Nichlas[66]. There was court action, in which "judgment was rendered against him and he was "turned out" of possession of this land.

Exactly what the basis for Edward and Joseph Nichlas claim is unknown at this time.

But a question stands out, why did William opt to settle along the banks of the Juniata? Why there, after all the work involved in the warrant application process for the 300 acres nears Chest Manor, in today's Cambria County?

It is interesting to note that within a year or so from William's land warrant application near Chest Manor he had taken residence to the east, in the vicinity of today's Hollidaysburg. However, he did not lose interest in the lands near Chest Manor. Over the following years he grew his holdings there from the original warranted 300 acres to about 1900 acres in the 1780s. So in the late 1700s he was a resident and landowner in the upper reaches of the Juniata River system, was well as a claimant or owner of lands near Chest Springs.

The answer to the warrants for land in today's Cambria County, and why William ended up homesteading where today's Gaysport lies, may have something to do with early roadways and transportation.

Consider that William had a background in establishment of roadways. In the 1760s, he was twice appointed as a "viewer", along with others who were charged with establishing roadways in early Cumberland County. That experience showed again where, in 1776, he was selected as a "superintendent" for a road to be established between Frankstown and Bedford.

65 See https://idogenealogy.info/what-is-a-freeman-in-colonial-america/
66 Intended spelling.

His background and experience in the establishment of roadways may have proved to be personally beneficial. On March 29 1787 The General Assembly authorized the laying out of a state highway from the Frankstown Branch of the Juniata River to the River Conemaugh.[67] The point here being that William's expertise and experience in establishing roadways may have helped him recognize investment opportunities for the future.

Parallels Between Jones' Account and Historical Evidence

William's expertise in roadways and his settlement near Hollidaysburg (Page 4) provide a backdrop for examining U. J. Jones' misrepresentations of the Holliday brothers' history. While Jones' *History of the Early Settlement of the Juniata Valley* claims William and Adam arrived in 1768 and claimed lands, the evidence points to a different timeline and broader family involvement. Below, we compare two key claims to the corrected record.

Land Warrants: 1768 vs. 1773

Jones asserts that William and Adam took out land warrants in 1768. In fact, as detailed on the first page of this chapter, all four brothers—William, Adam, John Jr., and Samuel—secured 300-acre warrants in 1773 near Chest Manor in then-Frankstown Township. Jones' focus on William and Adam overlooks John Jr. and Samuel's roles, reflecting his reliance on faulty oral histories.

Settlement Choices: Hollidaysburg vs. Chest Manor

Jones suggests William coveted western lands but was persuaded by Adam to stay. However, records suggest that William independently recognized the strategic value of the area along the upper Juniata River. (Page 3 of this chapter, see the figure). His settlement there by 1775, coupled with his roadway expertise, reflects a calculated choice rather than Adam's influence.

Conclusion

These parallels reveal how Jones' reliance on faulty oral histories led to a distorted timeline and misrepresentation of the Holliday brothers' contributions. By exaggerating William and Adam's early presence and marginalizing John Jr. and Samuel, Jones' account shaped a misleading narrative of Hollidaysburg's founding. That narrative, became deeply embedded in local folklore and culture.

67 See History of Huntingdon and Blair Counties, J. Simpson Africa; page 30

11 Acknowledgments

I want to thank the following individuals who offered advice, commented, and encouraged the writing of this paper. In alphabetical order, they are:

James (Jim) Lowe

Jim is the current Chairman of the Board of the Blair County Historical Society and recently retired as a history teacher from the Altoona Area School District. He has received numerous recognition's and honors for his contributions. Jim has been very supportive of this alternative view of the history of Hollidaysburg and its associated founders, William and Adam Holliday. His comments and insights are most appreciated.

Karen (Knarr) Morrow

Karen is the current Newsletter Editor for the Blair County Genealogical Society. It was Karen who brought the history of the Manors of early Pennsylvania to my attention. Specifically, Chest Manor (near today's Chest Springs in Cambria County), and pointed how that may have tied into the Holliday brothers' early interest in this area.

Sarah Phillips

Sarah is a retired attorney and trust officer in the Boston area who now researches her family genealogy in early Clearfield County. Her work locating additional land-warrant activity involving the Holliday brothers significantly expanded the evidentiary base for this paper. Her findings clarified early patterns of land ownership and transfer in the region and helped illuminate the broader context of the Holliday brothers' movements. Her willingness to share her research and insights is greatly appreciated.

Larry D. Smith

Larry D. Smith is a prominent historian specializing in the history of Bedford County, Pennsylvania. His research focuses on the 18th-century Pennsylvania frontier and the early European settlement of the region, including the area of present-day Blair County, which was originally part of Bedford County. His technical knowledge was helpful time and again in helping me understand the ways and means of the inhabitants and lives of 18th-century central Pennsylvania residents. Special thanks to Mr. Smith for his permission to use or reference his material.

James Snyder Jr.

Jim is the President of the Blair County Genealogical Society. His enthusiasm for local history is contagious. His research into the trail of land transactions that led to Adam Holliday acquiring the lands upon which Hollidaysburg was founded will help correct many misconceptions about Adam and

William Holliday, as well as the true events that led to the founding of Hollidaysburg. Special thanks to Mr. Snyder for permission to use his Adam Holliday land ownership research and chart.

12 Appendix

An Assessment of "*The Early Settlement of the Juniata Valley*" by U. J. Jones

The following is used with permission from Larry D. Smith
See "Genealogical & Historical Research in Old-Bedford County"
https://motherbedford.com/GenBook39.htm

Brief Biography of U. J. Jones[68]

In the year 1855 a writer of fiction, Uriah James Jones produced a book, History Of The Early Settlement Of The Juniata Valley: Embracing An Account Of The Early Pioneers, And The Trials And Privations Incident To The Settlement Of The Valley, Predatory Incursions, Massacres, And Abductions By The Indians During The French And Indian Wars, And The War Of The Revolution, &c. With that book, he succeeded in causing more damage to the recording of history of this region than anyone else.

Uriah James Jones moved to Hollidaysburg and began to work as the editor of the Standard, the local newspaper. Mr. Jones had married Margaretta L. Traugh, the sister of O.A. Traugh, then publisher of the Standard. He stayed only a short while before moving, in 1846, to Pittsburgh where he found employment as the publisher of the newspaper, the Keystone. That venture was a failure, and Mr. Jones later moved back to Hollidaysburg, where he resided and edited the Standard until the late-1850s. In 1858 he moved to Lancaster to edit the Express. He moved back to Hollidaysburg within a year and, then in 1860, he made his final move to Harrisburg to serve as editor of the Patriot and Union. U.J. Jones died in Harrisburg in the year 1864 at the age of forty-four after being struck by a train.

U. J. Jones Writing Style: Entertaining First – Factual History Secondary

The legacy that U.J. Jones left to Blair County as a result of his brief years as a resident was the volume, History Of The Early Settlement Of The Juniata Valley: Embracing An Account Of The Early Pioneers, And The Trials And Privations Incident To The Settlement Of The Valley, Predatory Incursions, Massacres, And Abductions By The Indians During The French And Indian Wars, And The

68 See https://motherbedford.com/GenBook39.htm

War Of The Revolution, &c. Whether that legacy was a favorable one to the county is very questionable. Mr. Jones started his writing career as a writer of fiction. The book, Simon Girty, was his single famous foray into the realm of historical fiction. According to William H. Egle, who edited, added an appendix and republished the History Of The Early Settlement Of The Juniata Valley, in 1889, Mr. Jones "could tell a local happening in a way that made you read it despite yourself." There was no doubt that Uriah J. Jones could write imaginative narratives, having started his career by writing fiction and traveling with a theatre company for over a year.

Incorporating MotherBedford.com as a Source Refuting U.J. Jones's Holliday History

The website MotherBedford.com provides a detailed critique of U.J. Jones's historical reliability and specifically addresses the inaccuracies and fictionalization present in his 1855 work, *History Of The Early Settlement Of The Juniata Valley*. This source strengthens and supports the refutation of Jones's 1768 Holliday history in several key ways:

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1. Jones's Use of Fiction and Unreliable Testimony

MotherBedford.com notes that Jones began his writing career as a writer of fiction and often relied on imaginative narratives rather than verified historical fact. The site explains that Jones's book "gave to his readers...historical facts extravagantly spiced with fiction," and that his liberal use of imagination "acted as a virus to destroy historical fact for the next one hundred and fifty years"2. This context directly undermines the credibility of Jones's claims about the Holliday brothers' 1768 land warrants and settlements.

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2. Lack of Primary Source Verification

The analysis at MotherBedford.com highlights that Jones frequently quoted elderly individuals whose recollections were questionable, sometimes recounting events they could not have personally witnessed or remembered accurately2. This practice casts doubt on the authenticity of anecdotes such as Adam Holliday's supposed 1768 land acquisition and subsequent legal battles with Harry Gordon.

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3. Spread of Folklore as Fact

MotherBedford.com emphasizes how Jones's blend of folklore and fact led to his accounts being uncritically repeated by later historians, perpetuating myths about early settlement in the Juniata Valley, including the Holliday narrative2. The site specifically warns that "too many of Jones' fanciful quotes and anecdotes were accepted as pure fact without any checking to verify their validity," which is precisely the case with the 1768 Holliday land warrant story.

4. Summary of Refutation

By providing a broader historiographical critique, MotherBedford.com supports the findings from land records and genealogical research that there is no documentary evidence for Jones's version of the Holliday brothers' settlement or land ownership in 176812. Instead, Jones's narrative is shown to be a blend of local folklore, unreliable testimony, and creative embellishment, rather than a factual account.

Summary

MotherBedford.com is a highly relevant and authoritative source that exposes the fictional and unreliable nature of U.J. Jones's 1768 Holliday history. It demonstrates that Jones's work is not a trustworthy foundation for understanding the true early settlement of Hollidaysburg and the Holliday family, and that his stories should be treated with skepticism and cross-checked against primary documents and modern research12.

1. https://ppl-ai-file-upload.s3.amazonaws.com/web/direct-files/attachments/7920653/b726365b-8be1-4444-b368-c6d7a6005d1a/1768-Land-Warrant-Folklore.pdf
2. https://motherbedford.com/GenBook39.htm
3. https://www.motherbedford.com/A%20History%20Of%20The%20O-GTHS.pdf
4. https://supremecourthistory.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Volume-15-Number-1-1990.pdf
5. https://archive.org/download/captainrogerjone00jone/captainrogerjone00jone.pdf
6. http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/41392
7. https://sites.rootsweb.com/~paxson/southern/holliday.html
8. https://bcgslibrary.org/product/u-j-jones-history-of-the-juniata-valley-1940-reprint/
9. https://psi424.cankaya.edu.tr/uploads/files/Hobsbawm_and_Ranger_eds_The_Invention_of_Tradition.pdf
10. https://www.nsa.gov/portals/75/documents/news-features/declassified-documents/cryptologic-histories/cold_war_ii.pdf

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What U. J. Jones Said About "The History of the Early Settlement of the Juniata Valley"

In the preface of his book, Jones defends his work as follows:

> *"I am free to confess that the language of the book is not clothed in that attractive garb which makes books popular in the age we live in; but then it must be remembered that I am not, worthy reader, submitting to your judgment a romance, but a History, based upon immutable and undying Truths."*

Despite Jones' claim to the contrary, many of the "immutable and undying Truths" he leans on are misinterpreted or simply incorrect. In 1940, local historian, genealogist, and publisher Floyd G. Hoenstine published a reprint of the 1889 edition of the "History of the Early Settlement of the Juniata Valley." Mr. Hoenstine reprint which includes "Notes and Extensions" carefully and tactfully addresses the inconsistencies and factual errors that he found in Jones' original work. Not the least of which was to correct Jones' fundamental genealogical error that William and Adam were "cousins".[69] In fact, they were brothers. There are other significant errors that Hoenstine addresses, especially related to land warrants and acquisitions of both William and Adam Holliday. These will be covered later in this paper.

It would be interesting to know what the basis for Jones' self-validation is. In fact, there is an abundance of evidence to the contrary of Jones' "immutable and undying Truths."

Yet despite Jones' assertion of the validity of his writing, we also see in the dedication of the book that he may have had some qualms about his own writing style as it pertains to the content of the book. Regarding the book, Jones wrote to Major B. F. Bell

> *"…...if the History proves a mere catchpenny swindle, let the odium and execrations of a humbugged public fall upon THE AUTHOR."*

U. J. Jones's comment about the book potentially being a "catchpenny swindle" could indeed reflect his self-awareness that he embellished historical events to make "History of the Early Settlement of the Juniata Valley" more engaging and appealing to readers. By prioritizing narrative flair and dramatic storytelling, he might have crossed the line between strict historical accuracy and historical fiction.

Local Loyalty to U. J. Jones' Version of Holliday History

In 1939, Henry W. Shoemaker, a columnist for the *Altoona Tribune*, offered what may be the clearest expression of local loyalty to Uriah J. Jones's narrative. After praising *History of the Early Settlement of the Juniata Valley* as "the most authoritative and reliable" source for the region, Shoemaker conceded that "errors" might exist but insisted that "the fault should be placed upon the shoulders of others, not upon the author of that book." That single sentence neatly captures the problem of placing folklore before fact.

It absolves Jones of the basic historian's duty to test informants against the documentary record and protects a beloved narrative even when its core claims are wrong. For example, Adam Holliday is credited with rallying and leading the local inhabitants during the War for Independence, a role the surviving records show was carried out by William Holliday. Clinging to beloved folklore at the expense of contemporary evidence is counter-productive to seeking historical truth.

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69 See page 287 of Hoenstine's reprint of Jones'1889 edition.

An Assessment *"American Guthrie And Allied Families"*

For clarity, the full title of the book is *"American Guthrie And Allied Families: Lineal Representations Of The Colonial Guthries Of Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Maryland, Delaware, Virginia, North And South Carolina, Some Post-Revolutionary Emigrants And Of Some Allied Families"*

However for convenience sake, when referring to the above source we'll refer to the book as "American Guthrie and Allied Families"

Overall, the document is a fairly good source of information. Throughout you will find where the document uses footnotes to share where the some of the information therein came from.

However as the information goes back in time, those sources tend to become sparse. Such is the case as with Edmund and Mary Halliday. That doesn't necessarily diminish the validity of the information but it does put a big asterisk in place which is to at least allow the possibility that the information is not accurate.

For example, the Holliday family commonly employed patronymics and derived names from given first names to preserve lineage. That being the case, a valid question arises: why aren't there more descendants named Edmond Holliday in the family line?

Perhaps this is simply more of a curiosity than a concern, but let's keep that in mind.

From Frontier to Borough: Geographical Boundary Changes of Hollidaysburg's Land

The detailed geographical boundary changes by county and township for the location of present-day **Hollidaysburg, Pennsylvania**, from 1768 to today, at both county and township levels, are as follows:

Year	County	Township/ Borough	Notes
1768	Cumberland County	Barree Township	Barree Township was a large portion of early Cumberland County. This would have been the location where William and Adam arrived, if Jones' folklore tale were true.
1771	Bedford County	Barree Township	Bedford County formed from western Cumberland; Barree Township was one of Bedford's original large townships including Hollidaysburg land.
Circa 1775	Bedford County	Frankstown Township	Frankstown Township was created from a portion of Barree and Bedford Township, encompassing the lands of today's Hollidaysburg. Records have William Holliday both in Barree Township and Frankstown Township in 1775. Probably explained by modification of Township status at the time. Meanwhile, brother Adam was residing in Peters Township, Cumberland County
1787	Huntingdon County	Frankstown Township	Huntingdon County was formed from Bedford County's northeast portion, shifting county jurisdiction of the area to Huntingdon. Frankstown remained the township.
1796	Huntingdon County	Frankstown Township	Hollidaysburg, considered a village at the time, was laid out in Frankstown Township.
1836	Huntingdon County	Hollidaysburg Borough	Incorporated as a borough, separating from township governance.
1846	Blair County	Hollidaysburg Borough	Blair County formed from parts of Huntingdon and Bedford Counties; Hollidaysburg became the county seat.
Present	Blair County	Hollidaysburg Borough	

Holliday Brothers Land Warrants

The following survey information comes from the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC) website. These records document 1773 warrant and survey activity associated with members of the Holliday family in areas now part of Chest Springs in Cambria County and Decatur Township in Clearfield County.

Chest Springs Area Warrants (Manor of Chest)

The 1773 surveys for these tracts show that William Holliday Sr. had a tract identified as “Holiday’s Choice” (spelled with one “L”). The survey appears to place this tract approximately one-half mile south of Chest Manor. William also held other interests in the vicinity.

- **William Holliday Sr.** (“Holiday’s Choice”): https://www.phmc.state.pa.us/bah/dam/rg/di/r17-114copiedsurveybooks/Books%20C1-C234/Book%20C079/Book%20C-079%20pg%20364.pdf

Surveys for the other three brothers (Samuel, Adam, and John Jr.) are located nearby and appear to adjoin one another:

- **Samuel Holliday:** https://www.phmc.state.pa.us/bah/dam/rg/di/r17-114copiedsurveybooks/Books%20D1-D90/Book%20D58/Book%20D-58%20pg%20563.pdf
- **Adam Holliday:** https://www.phmc.state.pa.us/bah/dam/rg/di/r17-114copiedsurveybooks/Books%20C1-C234/Book%20C079/Book%20C-079%20pg%20366.pdf
- **John Holliday Jr.**: https://www.phmc.state.pa.us/bah/dam/rg/di/r17-114copiedsurveybooks/Books%20C1-C234/Book%20C092/Book%20C-092%20pg%20468.pdf

Additional Related Surveys

- James Holliday (**likely a son of William Holliday Sr.**) appears as an adjoining landowner on a survey for John McCleland. https://www.phmc.state.pa.us/bah/dam/rg/di/r17-114copiedsurveybooks/Books%20A%20-%20Z/Book%20M/Book%20M%20pg%20844.pdf
- William Holliday Jr. (**the fifth child of William Holliday Sr.**) contested a warrant claim by Jacob Nagle: https://www.phmc.state.pa.us/bah/dam/rg/di/r17-114copiedsurveybooks/Books%20C1-C234/Book%20C179/Book%20C-179%20pg%20559.pdf

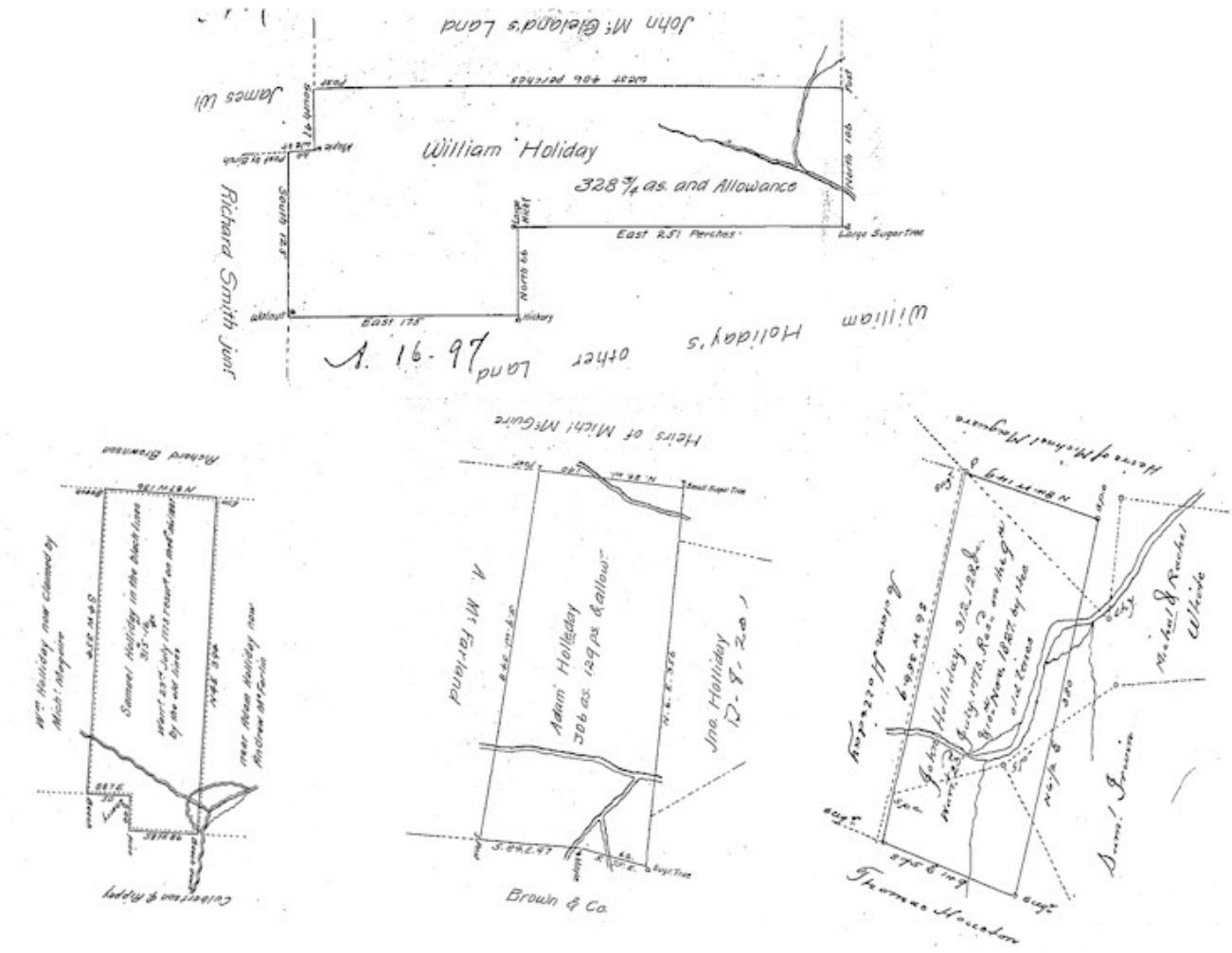

Figure 7: Survey Maps for the "Chest Springs" Land Warrants of the Holliday Brothers

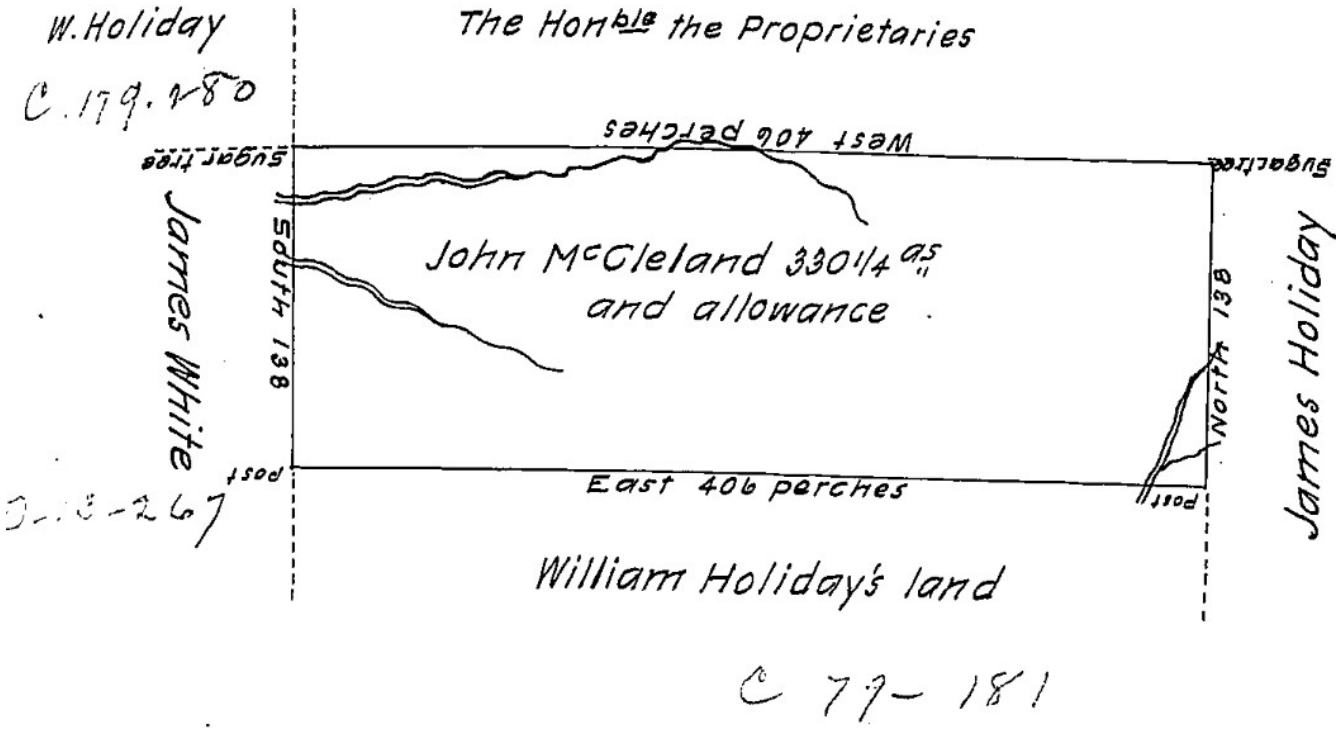

Figure 8: McClelland Warrant with James Holliday as Adjoiner

Decatur Township Warrants (Clearfield County)

Survey records exist for John and Samuel Holliday in present-day Decatur Township. The surveys place Samuel's tract north of John's. Adam and William Sr. are mentioned in this area only as adjoining tract owners. Samuel's survey notes the tract to the north as "Parcel More in Right of A. Holliday.

- **Samuel Holliday**: https://www.phmc.state.pa.us/bah/dam/rg/di/r17-114copiedsurveybooks/Books%20C1-C234/Book%20C091/Book%20C-091%20pg%20194.pdf
- **John Holliday**: https://www.phmc.state.pa.us/bah/dam/rg/di/r17-114copiedsurveybooks/Books%20C1-C234/Book%20C092/Book%20C-092%20pg%20466.pdf
- Hugh Ralston survey showing adjoining tracts for Samuel and William: https://www.phmc.state.pa.us/bah/dam/rg/di/r17-114copiedsurveybooks/Books%20A%20-%20Z/Book%20H/Book%20H%20pg%20950.pdf

13 Glossary

Beaverdam Branch: A tributary of the Juniata River, central to the land that would become Hollidaysburg. In the document (e.g., Preface), it marks the location where William and Adam Holliday settled, contrasting with Jones' 1768 narrative.

Chest Manor: A proprietary manor reserved by the Penn family in colonial Pennsylvania, located near modern Chest Springs in Cambria County. In the document (e.g., Chapter 6), it relates to the Hollidays' 1773 land warrants, influencing their early claims and settlement decisions and the Purchase Line.

Chimney Rocks: A prominent geological formation near Hollidaysburg, often cited in folklore as the site where the Holliday brothers allegedly arrived in 1768. The document (e.g., Chapter 4) debunks this as part of U.J. Jones' embellished account, emphasizing evidence over myth.

DAR (Daughters of the American Revolution): A patriotic organization in the United States focused on honoring the legacy of those who contributed to the American Revolution, often through genealogical documentation. In the document (e.g., Preface), it's noted that older DAR applications relied on U.J. Jones' work, influencing historical plaques.

The Diamond: The Diamond is the historic center and public square of downtown Hollidaysburg, Pennsylvania. It is a uniquely shaped, open intersection at Allegheny and Montgomery Streets, historically serving as the commercial and civic core of the town since its founding in the late 18th century.

Frontiersmen: Early settlers or explorers who ventured into undeveloped or contested regions, often facing Native American and environmental challenges. This document (e.g., Preface) examines the s of William and Adam as 1768 frontiersmen, per Jones' account.

Juniata Valley: A geographic region in central Pennsylvania, encompassing parts of modern Blair, Huntingdon, and Mifflin Counties, historically significant for early settlement. The document (e.g., Preface) ties it to U.J. Jones' book and the Hollidays' eventual settlement area.

Kittanning Trail: An ancient Native American path (also called Kittanning Path or Frankstown Path) that served as a major east-west route through Pennsylvania's Allegheny Mountains. In the document (e.g., Chapter 6), it is suggested as a possible factor in the Hollidays' choice of land near Chest Manor for strategic access to western frontiers.

Land Patent: The final legal step in colonial Pennsylvania's land acquisition process, granting official ownership after a warrant, survey, and payment. The document (e.g., Chapter 6) discusses how the Hollidays obtained patents in the 1790s for their claims, contrasting with Jones' inaccurate timelines.

Land Survey: The official measurement and mapping of a land tract, required after obtaining a warrant to define boundaries and confirm acreage. In the document (e.g., Chapter 1 and Appendix), surveys like the 1760 Antrim Township draft and Chest Manor map provide evidence of the Hollidays' early holdings.

Land Warrant: A legal document issued by colonial authorities granting an individual the right to claim and survey a specific tract of land. The document (e.g., Chapter 1) mentions John Holliday's 1744 land warrant in Antrim Township and William's 1744 warrant, key evidence of early settlement.

Manor: A large tract of land reserved by the Penn family (proprietors of Pennsylvania) for their use or favored settlers, often surveyed but not initially available for public warranting. The document references Chest Manor (e.g., Chapter 6) as a significant area affecting Holliday land holdings.

Militia: Local colonial military units raised for defense during the Revolutionary War, often composed of part-time citizen-soldiers under county command. The document (e.g., Chapter 8) examines Bedford and Cumberland County militia records to clarify the Hollidays' service, distinguishing between elders and youths.

Patronymics: The practice of deriving a personal name from the given name of one's father or a paternal ancestor, often by adding a prefix or suffix (e.g., "Johnson" meaning "son of John"). In genealogical research, this naming convention can lead to repeated names across generations, causing confusion in family histories. In the context of the Holliday family, as discussed in this document (e.g., Chapter 4), patronymics explain the multiple "Williams" and "Adams," where children were named after relatives, contributing to mistaken identities in historical records.

Paymaster: A designation for William Holliday Sr., referring to his role in procuring and reimbursing provisions for the Bedford County militia during the Revolutionary War. In the document (e.g., Preface and Chapter 9), it highlights his logistical contributions, separate from combat myths.

Presbyterians: A Protestant Christian denomination characterized by a governance structure led by elected elders. In the document (e.g., Chapter 3), their persecution in Ireland is noted as a factor driving Scots-Irish migration, including the Hollidays, to Pennsylvania.

Purchase Line: A boundary line established by the 1768 Treaty of Fort Stanwix between the British colonies and Native American territories, prohibiting white settlement west of the line until further land purchases were negotiated. It ran through Pennsylvania, marking the edge of legally available land for colonists. In this document (e.g., Chapter 6), it relates to the Hollidays' land claims, as the line's finalization in 1773 opened areas like Chest Manor for warrants and settlement.

SAR (Sons of the American Revolution): A patriotic organization similar to DAR, dedicated to preserving the memory of American Revolution participants. Mentioned alongside DAR on page 5, it highlights the reliance on Jones' flawed accounts for ancestral claims.

Scots-Irish: A term describing people of Scottish descent who migrated to Ulster (northern Ireland) in the 17th century and later to America, predominantly as Presbyterian Protestants, between 1700 and

1820. In the document (e.g., Chapter 2), this refers to the likely ancestry of the Holliday family, linking their origins to Antrim Township and Donegal.

Treaty of Fort Stanwix: A 1768 agreement between the British and Native American tribes that established the Purchase Line, limiting colonial settlement west of the boundary. In the document (e.g., Chapter 6), it relates to the timing of Holliday land claims in central Pennsylvania.